This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

E
302 6
.B9
F7

C 539,672

Some Papers of Aaron Burr

BY

WORTHINGTON C. FORD

PRESENTED BY
THE SOCIETY

E
30
.B9
F7

American Antiquarian Society

Some Papers of Aaron Burr

44

BY

WORTHINGTON C. FORD

Reprinted from the Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society for April 1919

WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS, U.S.A.
PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY
1920

THE DAVIS PRESS
WORCESTER, MASS

SOME PAPERS OF AARON BURR

BY WORTHINGTON CHAUNCY FORD

The history of this collection of some ninety letters is this. Matthew L. Davis, for many years the friend and trusted adviser of Burr, to whom he left his papers in order that a memoir—a euphemism for a defence—might be prepared, in 1839 gave to Mrs. John Davis of Massachusetts, at her request, some "autographs" selected from the Burr papers. An autograph may be an historical paper, but usually it is not. The autograph hunter is contented to possess a signature, a legal document with seal and signature, or a portion of a letter cut or torn from its context, although in the process the ruin of a fine historical paper might be caused. What the Grangerizer is to books the autograph hunter is to manuscripts—a pest to be educated out of his destructive courses or to be restrained from access to collections of papers. Davis, judging by his compilation, had no just idea of the value or relation of what had been entrusted to him. The name at the foot of the writing he judged according to the popular conception of individuals in history entertained in 1839, and that conception was wholly wrong. There were as many collectors of hair, last words, buttons, and buckles as of historical papers, and a letter of Washington had no more value than a letter of one of his generals or aides—which was no value at all. So limited was the market for such objects, so easily satisfied, and so little the discrimination of so-called collectors that the best of family records suffered by attrition, and years after Davis so light-heartedly drew on the Burr bequest to gratify the caprice of a namesake, Jared Sparks could distribute on request a state paper of Washington leaf by leaf. It was as

intelligent and praiseworthy as a mutual distribution of photographs—a later fancy which somewhat relieved the growing pressure for autographs.

If it is assumed that Davis had no true idea of what a manuscript should be, valuable for its content—and nowhere has he given evidence of possessing such an idea—then the righteous indignation of every student of the Burr period is fittingly directed against him. To dip casually into a collection and select almost accidentally a few papers would be a procedure to shame a modern investigator. Like the haruspex of old he must most carefully examine the entrails of the victim to determine the course of fate. Only on a careful search can the best of a collection be found. What must have been the Burr papers if any judgment can be based on the haphazard selection of these autographs! Name some of these pieces: the letter of Roger Sherman announcing the appointment by Congress of general officers in the Continental army in 1775, with the reasons; an important letter from General Schuyler to General Montgomery (1775), letters from Charles Lee, Chase and Carroll, Lincoln, Hull and Duer to General Wooster; an address in French to the inhabitants of Quebec signed by Benedict Arnold, enjoining them to accept the paper bills of credit of the Continental Congress; a holograph letter of Israel Putnam to Margaret Moncrieffe, and Putnam's letters are so few in number as to be a most sought acquisition, and in them the spelling is according to Putnam not to Johnson—or anywhere near it; a long letter on military matters from Alexander Macdougall and a short note from James Rivington—was he a tory or a good rebel, or both? another from James Wilkinson—is there any doubt as to what he was or deserved? a letter from Gallatin and a few lines from Hamilton; political sheets from Caesar A. Rodney, Thomas Jefferson, Jonathan Russell, Isaiah Bloomfield, Alexander J. Dallas, Willett, Thomas Truxtun, John Taylor of Caroline; a fine letter from

Luther Martin to Joseph Alston on Burr's imprisonment in Richmond, and examples of Theodosia and her husband, of the Prevosts and of Burr himself. If such are sample pieces, what must the whole Burr collection have been? Did it contain the papers of the unfortunate—yet fortunate General Wooster, who did not live to meet certain defeat? Did it contain the records of that rash and ill-considered expedition of 1775-76 to Canada? The sense of indignation against Davis increases as each piece is noted. How account for his criminal carelessness in permitting such a collection to be lost? It was a crime against Burr, his friend and benefactor, and it was a crime against posterity. The incident gives a proper measure of Matthew L. Davis.[1] Fortunately the Ms. of Burr's Journal, when in Europe, 1808-1810, escaped destruction and has been adequately printed by the generous interest of Mr. William K. Bixby, of St. Louis. The Burr papers as they were can only be fancied from the few samples that have survived. This volume made up for Mrs. John Davis thus becomes precious, for it is more characteristic of Burr than any I have met, yet, I insist, the selection must have been accidental.

In another way these letters form an indictment against Davis and all his kind. He took unpardonable liberties with the text of some which he did print. I have in another place[2] tried to show the gradual development of the editorial function, so largely a matter of conscience, and free speech, and need not again specify the various sins which were in favor when Davis too successfully edited his trust into nothingness. He was guilty of all of them. Whatever was thought of Burr in his public and in his private relations—and the opinion held of him in the nine-

[1]In none of the biographical dictionaries is his middle name spelled out and he is invariably referred to as Matthew L. Davis. Mr. A. J. Wall of the N. Y. Historical Society, in answering a letter of inquiry on the subject, finds that his name was Matthew Livingston Davis, that he was born Oct. 28, 1773, the son of Matthew Davis and Phebe Wells, and that he was buried in Trinity Church cemetery.

[2]American Historical Review, XXIII, 273.

teenth century was quite impressively unanimous—was due to Davis, described as his sole friend for a almost a generation. The worst breach of trust is that which involves the reputation of a benefactor, of one who has bestowed favors and consideration with or without selfish purpose. Burr did not live or die in the odor of sanctity—he could not, in spite of the accumulated credit of his ancestry, in spite of much in extenuation he could himself have supplied. But the bad odor which contemporary conditions aggravated might have been partially deodorized by a judicious statement of truth, for which, from his point of view, the papers left by Burr would have been ample.

Of this responsibility Davis had not the slightest consciousness. With his friend's repute solemnly entrusted to him he went out of his way to destroy it. The deliberate stab which was as needless as it was fatal, is contained in Davis' introduction and again in the text of the Memoirs,[3] where the morals of Burr were blackened beyond recovery. The opening given to explain or even to excuse his public career was as deliberately neglected. Burr, the man, was stripped naked for public exposure, and this was done by the one person whom he had long known, favored and looked upon as his defender to be. Even royalty cannot stand such a test. "The generality of princes," says Gibbon, and it is as true now as 1600 years ago, "if they were stripped of their purple and cast naked into the world, would immediately sink to the lowest rank of society, without a hope of emerging from their obscurity."[4] We are asked to believe that Davis was a creditable correspondent of the New York "Courier and Enquirer" and of the London "Times." Such an experience should have developed a journalistic habit useful in biography, a sense of what is important, or striking, or informing. In fact he took a diamond

[3]Memoirs, I. 91, 181.
[4]Gibbon, Decline and Fall (Milman ed.), III. 133.

and reduced it to paste. He blabbed and destroyed the evidence. Could there be greater or more cowardly disloyalty?

If this journalist, of whose merits so low an opinion must be formed, was responsible for the quite uncalled for exposure of Burr's personal weaknesses, another journalist sought to remedy the fault. James Parton, was, in my early days, somewhat unjustly described as the "great American romancer." Imagination is a desirable quality in biography, especially where the writer is "short" of knowledge or material and a little "long" on temperament. The most successful bit of biographical writing in America was Weems' Washington, which savors of qualities to be found in a mediæval romance of knighthood or of sainthood. What Weems was in little Parton was in large, and his relations are picturesque, highly colored and keenly journalistic—still not unreadable and quite misleading. He was incapable of sounding the depths of character, of analyzing motives and following the turnings of that self-deception which so largely constitutes political life. His Burr is a more winning personality and a more important actor in the drama of history than the Burr of Davis; but in seeking to accomplish this result he so disposed the lights and shadows as to produce a picture which was not a portrait. Even his industry could not manufacture the necessary material, and his use of what he had is often open to question. It should also be remembered that the Burr was Parton's second attempt at biography and his first on a national scale. For Horace Greeley before 1855 was not a figure to be evoked from its partial obscurity except by an aspiring journalist.[5] Generally speaking for a newspaper man to write of a living master journalist smacks of the biography condemned by the description of a "campaign biography." Parton's Burr was a great improvement on

[5]Parton's Life of Greeley appeared in 1855; his Burr in 1858.

that of Davis, but yet much was required before proper estimation could be had. What could he have turned out had he been in the possession of the wealth thrown away upon Davis!

The historian who discovered Aaron Burr was Henry Adams. Alone, Burr had been studied chiefly in the shadows of the duel with Hamilton, his successful opponent rather than rival; in relation, Mr. Adams placed him in a series of dramatic tableaux where the high light developed positions which, analyzed, proved hitherto unrecognized qualities and possibilities. History is not merciless, but only true. Partisan history is not only merciless but untrue, and Burr, a politician, pictured by writers of pronounced political leanings, suffered through personal qualities which demanded sympathy without having deserved it. The most complex combination of elements yields to chemical analysis; it may be measured, weighed and broken into its constituents. The simplest character defies analysis, because there are no absolutes, no definite weights, no uniform, inexorable combinations. Unconsciously we use false weights and measures, for we use our own equipment and seek to apply it to other times and other persons. Could anything be more misleading?

Let us summarize the Adams presentation. He describes Burr as of "pure Connecticut Calvinistic blood"[6] as having succeeded in lowering the standard of New York politics,[7] something that to our more experienced generation would seem impossible. And then passing over the detail of twenty active years—Burr was forty-five years of age in 1801—he places him in the United States Senate, on March 4, about to take the oath as Vice-President of the United States, but one step below the office which the interested flattery and trained garrulity of midwives have predicted for every male child born in the country

---

[6]History, I. 109. Mr. Chapin, of the Rhode Island Historical Society, tells me that the term is one implying reproach.

[7]Ib., 112.

since Washington first took the oath of the Presidency, and for which Lincoln and Garfield kept alive the traditions of humble beginnings and glorious endings, and the voice of pure democracy preaches the gospel of equality of opportunity. Here is the picture:

"Another person, with individuality not less marked, took the oath of office the same day. When the Senate met at ten o'clock on the morning of March 4, 1801, Aaron Burr stood at the desk, and having duly sworn to support the Constitution, took his seat in the chair as Vice-President. This quiet, gentlemanly, and rather dignified figure, hardly taller than Madison, and dressed in much the same manner, impressed with favor all who first met him. An aristocrat imbued in the morality of Lord Chesterfield and Napoleon Bonaparte, Colonel Burr was the chosen head of Northern democracy, idol of the wards of New York city, and aspirant to the highest offices he could reach by means legal or beyond the law; for as he pleased himself with saying, after the manner of the First Consul of the French Republic, 'Great souls care little for small morals.' Among the other party leaders who have been mentioned,—Jefferson, Madison, Gallatin, Marshall,—not one was dishonest. The exaggerations or equivocations that Jefferson allowed himself, which led to the deep-rooted conviction of Marshall that he did not tell the truth and must therefore be dangerous, amounted to nothing when compared with the dishonesty of a corrupt man. Had the worst political charges against Jefferson been true, he would not have been necessarily corrupt. The self-deception inherent in every struggle for personal power was not the kind of immorality which characterized Colonel Burr. Jefferson, if his enemies were to be believed, might occasionally make misstatements of fact; yet he was true to the faith of his life, and would rather have abdicated his office and foregone his honors than have compassed even an imaginary wrong against the principles he professed. His life,

both private and public, was pure. His associates, like Madison, Gallatin, and Monroe, were men upon whose reputations no breath of scandal rested. The standard of morality at Washington, both in private society and in politics, was respectable. For this reason Colonel Burr was a new power in the government; for being in public and in private life an adventurer of the same school as scores who were then seeking fortune in the antechambers of Bonaparte and Pitt, he became a loadstone for every other adventurer who frequented New York or whom the chances of politics might throw into office. The Vice-President wielded power, for he was the certain centre of corruption."

Events soon showed that Jefferson could wield the national patronage in such a manner as to paralyze Burr's motions to strengthen a political position in New York. Local appointments tipped the scales in favor of Burr's rivals—the Clintons—or purchased the desertion of his supporters—the Livingstons; and scarcely had the summer of 1801 passed before Jefferson's own party in New York had been hopelessly split and Burr was well-advanced on the road of opposition. His personal dislike of Jefferson, which was cordially reciprocated, soon led to open insubordination. Under dictation, but not reluctantly, the press of party began to hound Burr from public life.[8] So successful was the attack that in 1804, with retirement from the Vice-Presidency in sight, Burr, "bankrupt in public and private character, abandoned by his own party as a man who no longer deserved confidence," turned to the Federalists for support. He gained recognition, aroused the jealousy of Hamilton and—we all know what followed. It is not so much the death of Hamilton on which we would dwell; it is that from the Federalists Burr gained the idea of disunion. Ambition and revenge, directed

---

[8] Adams's History, I, 279-283.

against the equally ambitious leader of the Federalists and the even more astute and powerful leader of the Republicans, were his undoing. In the flash of the pistol on Weehawken heights Burr ended all chance of regaining by legitimate means power the future might have held. His idea of an independent western confederation, even of an empire to be carved from Spanish territory, was splendid imagery approaching the dreams of a hashish smoker. So far from considering his career as ended when acquitted on a charge of treason, he had become desperate, and would "rather sacrifice the interests of his country than renounce celebrity and fortune." Such was the opinion of the French minister.[9] and such has been the verdict of posterity.

This cold-blooded, selfish ambition which so overreached itself is the public life of the man. Mr. Adams very properly confines his treatment to Burr's public career, using it judiciously as a foil to develop the position of other actors no more scrupulous than he in political battle. The other side—the personal—is better told in Burr's own letters—those to his wife, to his daughter and, if rumor and Davis are accepted, to almost any woman who was presentable and inconsolable. It is difficult to reconcile the two aspects of the man; indeed they cannot be reconciled. Allowing for the undoubted exaggeration of his faults, we find no reason to discount the dole of his virtues displayed in his affection for wife and daughter. Theodosia Burr has become one of the romantic characters in our history—not because much is known of her, but because what is known tempts speculation on inheritance and awakens doubt on what might have developed. To have surrendered to her influence is Burr's chief claim upon our compassion.

He possessed a like capacity for awakening affection in others—in his youth, something more than affection,

---

[9]Adams's History, II. 402, 407.

an unquestioning confidence. The names of his adherents in 1806 are those of his associates in 1776—thirty years earlier. Wilkinson, Dayton, Ogden, who were with him in the Canada campaign, reappear themselves or in a son in the New Orleans conspiracy. Yet with what a difference! The earlier venture is tinged with the spirit of a crusade, that lasting force which appeals to the ages; and its miserable failure can be placed largely to an excess of zeal which had neglected to measure material difficulties before presuming upon success through appeals to mutiny—to disloyalty. Montgomery, Wooster, and the lesser officers died in an effort to reach an "oppressed" people who did not want to be saved from their present governors. Arnold, Schuyler, Hazen and others survived that effort, making reputations of various colors by their service, developed later qualities or invited experiences which left them in arrested development or partial obscurity. It was New England that unjustly hampered Schuyler; it was ambition deformed under a sense of injustice that gave Arnold his undesirable eminence; it was poverty that reduced Hazen to helplessness.

Burr lived to share a combination of these misshapen fortunes, and in the event to have his name linked with Arnold. His personal bravery was not questioned—until his desertion of his fellow-conspirators on the Mississippi. His ambition kept alive a touch of idealism which had made the crusader in 1775, the politician of 1800, and the schemer after 1804. The man who impressed his college mates and won their confidence, was the same man who gained such control in New York politics as to be within sight, even touch, of the Presidency. The man who could plan the overthrow of his rival in political ambition was the same who could picture the carving of a kingdom from the western territory, the ousting of Spain from an empire. Yet whatever motion he embarked upon seems to have been undertaken on too

small capital—a reflection of the Canada situation. His political machine, sufficient for the moment, broke down when its strength appeared greatest, because his duel with Hamilton rendered its further growth difficult, if not impossible. A social machine which is for a moment arrested in motion is generally stalled in action. His attempt to detach the western states from the union failed, because he aroused somewhat late in the day the opposition of the United States government. Had he succeeded to his content, his means were totally inadequate to his object. Spain's empire in America—only a small part of which Burr coveted—has given the final test of his scheme based as it was upon nothing substantial. The long and trying passage of Spanish possessions from colonies to independent states, even now not wholly accomplished in some after nearly a century of effort, proves how little chance a foreign adventurer would have had to obtain so much as a foothold in territory or making a lasting impression on the population of that territory. The equally long list of attempts to gain access to and alter this inert but combustible material, from Miranda to our intervention in Cuba, reduces Burr's intent to foolishness. By poverty he became an adventurer; and worst of all, he alienated even those who in personal loyalty or from interest attached their hopes and fortunes to his career, so thoroughly that it was literally true in the end he had as a follower only Matthew L. Davis. It is one of Davis' peculiarities that he blamed Washington for not favoring Burr—though neither he nor Burr can give evidence of a personal hostility on the part of the general and president. The distrust and opposition of Jefferson and others are well established by the records, but they were incidents in the career of any ambitious politicians, versed in the methods of the darker side of political management. More suggestive than either of these forces was that which came from himself, making Wilkinson his betrayer, Dayton treacherous

and involving all concerned with him in perils such as obliged them to desert him and seek their own safety at the very time when he most needed their help and countenance. It is a remarkable history, whether studied on the lines of heredity, of development of character, or of performance; and few public characters in the history of the United States offer so picturesque a model for a biography, such a combination of capability and sordidness, ambition and power, ruthless pursuit of great ends on nothing but unstable personality. Playing for large stakes the cards were against him, but he had done his best to stack them in his own favor, and no true gambler complains when he loses. A succession of failures marks the salient points in his career. For his failures he had himself to blame; for our ignorance of little but his failures and for the absence of a possible salvage of character we hold Matthew L. Davis responsible.

MATTHEW L. DAVIS TO MRS. JOHN DAVIS[10]

NEW YORK 25th November 1839.

MADAM,—

Some time since you expressed a wish that I would select from among the papers of the late Col. Aaron Burr, a few Revolutionary Autographs. With others of a later date, they are herewith presented. May I be permitted to ask their acceptance as a testimonial of the profound respect entertained for your great Worth, and rare intellectual acquirements, by, Mada, Your most Obt. Servt.

M. L. DAVIS.

The Hon. Mrs. John Davis, Worcester

WILLIAM PATERSON TO AARON BURR[11]

PRINCETON, Thursday Noon.

[January 17th 1772.]

DEAR BURR,—I am just ready to take horse, and therefore cannot have the pleasure of waiting on you in person. Be

[10]Eliza, daughter of Rev. Aaron and Lucretia (Chandler) Bancroft, was born February 17,1791, married, March 28, 1822, John Davis, and died January 24, 1872. *See* Ancestry of John Davis and Eliza Bancroft, compiled by Horace Davis, San Francisco, 1897.

[11]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 36.

pleased to accept of the inclosed Essay on Dancing: if you pitch upon it as the Subject of your next discourse, it may perhaps furnish you with a few hints, and enable you to compose with the greater facility and dispatch. To do you any little services in my power will afford me great satisfaction, and I hope you will take the liberty (it is nothing more, my Dear Burr, than the freedom of a friend,) to call upon me whenever you think I can. When I shall be here again is uncertain; perhaps not before vacation: forbear with me whilst I say, *that you cannot speak too slow.* Your good judgment generally leads you to lay the emphasis on the most forcible word in the sentence; so far you are very right. But the misfortune is, that you lay too great stress upon the emphatical word. Every word should be distinctly pronounced; one should not be so highly sounded as to drown another. To see you shine as a speaker would give great pleasure to your friends in general, and to me in particular; I say nothing of your own honour; the desire of making others happy will, to a generous mind, be the strongest incentive. I am much mistaken, if such a desire has not great influence over you. You are certainly capable of making a good speaker. Exert yourself. I am in haste; Dear Burr, adieu.

WM. PATERSON.

Be careful of the inclosed; it is the only copy I have.

Mr. Aaron Burr.

[Addressed] To Mr. Aaron Burr.

[Memorandum] William Paterson Princeton Jan'y 17th 1772. Princeton.

TIMOTHY DWIGHT, JUN., TO AARON BURR.[12]

DEAR SIR,—By a poor candle, with poor eyes, and a poorer brain, I sit down to introduce a long wished for correspondence. You see how solicitous I am to preserve old connections, or rather to begin new ones. Relationship, by the fashionable notions of those large towns, which usurp a right to lead and govern our opinions, is dwindled to a formal nothing—a mere shell of ceremony. Our ancestors, whose honesty and simplicity, though different from the wise refinements of modern

[12]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1 p. 41.

politeness, were, perhaps, as deserving of imitation, as the insincere coldness of the present generation, cousin'd it to the tenth degree of kindred. Tho this was extending the matter to a pitch of extravagance, yet it was certainly founded upon a natural, rational principle. Who are so naturally our friends, as those who are born such? I defy a *New Yorker*, tho' callous'd over with city politeness, to be otherwise than pleased, with a view of ancient hospitality to relations, when exercised by a person of good breeding, and a genteel education. Now, say you, what has this to do with the introduction of correspondence? You shall know directly sir. The Edwardses have been always remarkable for this fondness for their relations. If you have the least inclination to prove yourself a true descendant of that (to us) respectable stock, you cannot fail of answering me very soon. This, was I disposed, I could demonstrate by algebra and syllogisms, in a twinkling; But hope you will believe me without either. I never asked for many connections in this way, nor was ever denied, but once, by a *Jersey*[13] Gentleman, originally of *New England*. I hope the disease is not epidemical, and that you have not determined against any communication with the rest of the world. It was a mortification, I confess: for I am too proud to be denied a request, tho' unreasonable, as many of mine are. Therefore I insist upon an answer, at least; and as many more, as you can find in your heart to give me; promising in return, as many by tale, though, without a large profit, at least 50 per cent. shant warrant their quality. I am Sir your sincere friend and servant,

TIMOTHY DWIGHT, Jun'r.

New Haven, March I don't know the day 1772 Wednesday.

[Addressed] For Mr. Aaron Burr at Nassau Hall in Princeton New Jersey. Favoured by Mr. Davenport.

[Memorandum] Timothy Dwight New-Haven March 10th 1772. Princeton.

---

[13]The gentleman's name was Allen, with whom you are doubtless acquainted. I wrote him two letters, and received no answer, which was a little disagreeable to me; almost as much so, as it would have been to him, to have answered me.

Samuel Spring to Aaron Burr[14]

It is a little strang to me that I have not heard any thing of you since your examination. I dont know but you are turned back and out of College too since you are so bakward to write, however I will if possible keep such thoughts out of my mind till I hear from you in particular. If you are let down a peg lower you may tell me of it: if you are permitted to live in College you may tell of it; and if you are turn'd out you may tell of that too; if you passed examination and have a Syllogism to speak at commencement *if you are able to make it* I suppose you may tell me of that likewise; or if you have got the *first oration in the class* you may *tell me if you will only do it* softly, indeed you may tell me any thing for I profess to be your friend. Therefore since you can trust me so far, I expect you will now write and let me know a little how matters are at present in College. In particular let me know the state of the society, and if I owe anything to it do you pay it and *charge it to your humble servant.* I hope you will write the first opportunity as I trust you have got some very good news to tell me concerning College in general, and I hope of yourself in particular. I have nothing remarkable to write at present; it is very pleasant to me where I am at present. The study of Divinity is very agreeable far more so than any other study would be to me whatever. I hope to see the time when you will see it your duty to go into the same study with a desire for the ministry. Remember that that was the prayer of your dear father and mother and is the prayer of your friends to this time, that you should step forth into his place and make it manifest that you are a friend to heaven and that you have a tast for glory. But this you are sensible can never be the case if you remain in a state of nature, therefore improve the present and future moments to the best of purposes, as knowing the time will soon be upon you when you will wish that in living you had lived right and acted rationally and like an immortal.

Samuel Spring.

[Addressed] To Mr. Aaron Burr, Princeton, N. Jersey College.

[Memorandum] Sam'l Spring, New-Port, May 15th, 1772.

[14]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 62.

Timothy Edwards to Aaron Burr[15]

Stockbridge, February 11th, 1774.

Dear Nephew,—Whether you study law with Mr. Reeve, or your uncle Pierpont, is a matter of indifference with me. I would have you act your own pleasure therein altogether. I shall write to your uncle upon it, but yet treat it as a matter of doubt. Your board I shall settle with the Doctor[16] myself. I will send you cash to pay for your horse, as soon as I have paid off, for my oxen, sent to the Jerseys, the last fall. Two hundred pounds for them is due this month. When that is paid you may be assured that I will send you as above. You may expect it on the fore part of March. If I had known of this want of yours sooner I would have paid it before this. We are all well and join in love etc. I am your affectionate Uncle and Guardian,

Timo. Edwards.

Sally's things are to be sent by the first sleigh.

[Addressed] To Mr. Aaron Burr at Bethlem.

Jonathan Sergeant, Sen., to Aaron Burr.

Princeton, May 24th, 1774.

Sir,—I received yours of the 21st Instant and observe the contents. I spent the next day after I was with you at Doctor Wetherspoon's[17] about gitting the matter settled with him about the rent and at last got the Judgment of one man that he should pay Seven pounds per year but have got no money of him yet and he is gone to Philadelphia so that I cannot speak to him. I have spent some time examining my accounts and find nothing due from me. This morning I went to Mr. Longstreets to enquire if he had any but could not see him he being from home in quest of money for you. Doctor Wetherspoon says he has an account against you which he expects will answer part of his debt and the remainder I will git him to pay as soon as I can so that it's uncertain whether any will

---

[15]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 46.
[16]Rev. Joseph Bellamy, of Bethlehem, Conn.
[17]John Witherspoon (1722-1794).

be ready for you this week or in a very short time or not. I am, your friend and humble Servant,

JON'N SERGEANT.

[Addressed] To Mr. Aaron Burr at Elizabeth-town. By the post.

ISAAC SEARS TO DAVID WOOSTER.[18]

NEW YORK, 14th June, 1775.

DEAR SIR,—The Troops from Cork destined for this City may be hourly expected. I have the pleasure to inform you that this day in Congress, it was moved That yourself and troops be requested to encamp within five miles of this City. The Motion was put off untill to morrow, at the intercession of the Members for three Counties, and you may be assured it will be carried by a great Majority.[19]

I am Dear Sir, Yours Affectionately,

ISAAC SEARS.

To General Wooster

ROGER SHERMAN TO DAVID WOOSTER[20]

PHILADELPHIA June 23d 1775.

DEAR SIR,—The Congress having determined it necessary to keep up an Army for the Defence of America at the Charge of the United Colonies have appointed the following General Officers George Washington Esqr. Commander in Chief, Major Generals, Ward, Lee, Schuyler and Putnam, Brigadier Generals Pomroy, Montgomery, yourself, Heath, Spencer, Thomas, Major Sullivan, of New Hampshire and one Green of Rhode Island. I am sensible that according to your former rank you were intitled to the place of a Major General, and as one was to be appointed in Connecticut I heartily recommended you to the Congress. I informed them of the Arrangement made by our Assembly, which I thought would be satisfactory to have them continue in the same order, but as General Putnam's fame was spread abroad, and especially his successful enterprize at Noddles Island the account of which had just arrived, it gave him a preference in the opinion of the

[18](1729-1786).

[19]American Archives, 4th Ser., II, 1297, 1299.

[20]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 59.

Delegates in general so that his appoint[ment] was unanimous among the Colonies. but from your known abilities and firm attachment to the American cause we were very desirous of your continuance in the Army, and hope you will accept of the appointment made by the Congress. I think the pay of a Brigadier is about 125 Dollars per month. I suppose a Commission is sent to you by General Washington. We received Intelligence yesterday of an engagement at Charlestown but have not had the particulars. all the Connecticut Troops are now taken into the Continental Army. I hope proper care will be taken to secure the Colony against any sudden invasion, which must be at their own expence. I have nothing further that I am at Liberty to acquaint you with of the doings of the Congress but what have been made public. I would not have any thing published in the papers that I write lest something may inadvertently escape me which ought not to be published. I should be glad if you would write to me every convenient opportunity and inform me of such occurrences, and other matters as you may think proper and useful for me to be acquainted with. I am with great esteem Your humble Servant,

ROGER SHERMAN.

P.S. The General Officers were Elected in the Congress not by nomination but by Ballot.

David Wooster Esqr.

[Addressed] To Major General Wooster of Connecticut, not at New York or Greenwich.

Forwarded by Sir Your very humble servant, John Hancock. Philadelphia 27 June 1775.

JOSEPH REED[21] TO DAVID WOOSTER

Camp at CAMBRIDGE, July 25, 1775.

Sir,—I am directed by his Excellency General Washington to inform you that yesterday afternoon 3 Men of War with a number of Transports sailed from Boston. They steer'd E. S. E. after they got out, but we cannot yet learn their destination, or whether they have taken off any part of the Troops of the Enemy. As their designs are so much unknown

[21](1741-1785.)

to us, and it is possible they may move to New York, the General thought proper to apprize you of it, that you may be prepared for such an event. This he would have done with his own hand but he has been much indisposed for some days past. I have the honour to be, Sir, Your most obedient and very humble Servant,

JOS. REED, Sec'y.

[Addressed] To the Hon. David Wooster Esqr., B. General of the Troops of the United Colonies of North America.

[Memorandum] Cambridge 25 July 1775. Gen'l Washington's letter.

JONATHAN TRUMBULL TO DAVID WOOSTER

LEBANON, 16th August, 1775.

SIR,—I have your favour of the 14th instant[22] per James Lockwood, Esquire.[23] Am of opinion that your return to Harlem with your men will be best. That it is necessary the Stock on Long Island etc. be secured against further depredation. Hope the people and their force there will be able to secure the same, if not, should rather at their desire and expence to furnish some other Companies from the Main—provided they can be spared, which is probable. Will send your Information to General Washington.

As to the Rev'd James Lyon[24] you mention, shall leave the disposition of him to your prudent direction. Such persons are very pernicious.

My Council will be with [me?] tomorrow shall then consult on the affair. Am oblidged for your intelligence, and for the service you have done the Islanders. I do not get any intelligence of importance that is late to communicate.

I am, with Esteem and Respect, Sir, Your Obedient Humble Servant,

JON'TH. TRUMBULL.

[Addressed] To Major General David Wooster at Oyster Ponds on Long Island. On the Public Service.

---

[22]American Archives, 4th Ser., III, 134.

[23]Appointed Secretary to General Wooster, May 1, 1775, and was with him in the Canada expedition. See Dexter, Yale Biographies, III, 193.

[24]Sabine, Loyalists, II, 40.

PHILIP V. B. LIVINGSTON[25] TO DAVID WOOSTER.

In Provincial Congress, NEW YORK August 18th, 1775.

SIR,—We enclose you a copy of a Paragraph in General Washington's letter of the 10th instant.[26] In consequence of which we desire you to return to your Camp at Harlem with the utmost speed to assist in the Defence of this City and Province.

We are, Sir, Your most obedient humble Servants,

By order, O

P. V. B. LIVINGSTON President.

[Addressed] To Brigadier General Wooster at East end of Nassau Island.

SALLY REEVE TO AARON BURR.

LITCHFIELD, September 2d, 1775.

DEAR BROTHER,—When Mr. Philips came home and informed me that you had not received one letter from us I was both sorry and angry sorry for the hard tho'ts you must entertain of me and angry at the Post for acting so ridiculous a part and he has serv'd us just so this week sat off with [out?] coming to Lichfield for any letters. I hop you will not think we have neglected you when I assure you this is the 6th letter we have wrote you since you have been at the camp if you should ever receive my first letter you will then see my sentiments on your leading a Solders life you will allso find I have promised if you are sick or wonded I will com and see you and I still assure you that the frightful nois of great guns nor the tho'ts of being in a Camp shall prevent my coming if either of those should be the case you will not expect a long letter when I inform you that I have been picklin preserving damsens and makeing jellies. I believe you will think it a pritty good days work for me. I did not know of this oppertunity 'till just now or I sould have took a more leasure time. one peace of newes Mr. Reeve[27] and I are become great milk sops. Do write som newes we are starving for want of it I wish you woud com and

---

[25](1710-1792.) Dexter, Yale Biographies, I, 430.

[26]American Archives, 4th Ser., III, 533, 536.

[27]Tapping Reeve (1744-1823).

make us a visit if it is but a day or two tho I believe I could perswad you to stay if I coud but see you. I am tyred so Good by

SALLY REEVE.

Bobb sends his compliments.

[Addressed] To Mr. Aaron Burr, Cambridge.

PHILIP SCHUYLER TO RICHARD MONTGOMERY.

TYONDEROGA, November 30th, 1775

DEAR GENERAL,—You send me such agreeable accounts, and so very frequently, that I am under the necessity of scribbling an hour before day, to announce the glad tidings to my superiors. Prescott[28] arrived and was in my room half an hour before I received your letter. I believe he could easily perceive that I knew his character, and I had an opportunity this morning to write him a line, in which I declared that I thought it a duty incumbent on every honest man to do to others as he would wish to be done by, that upon this principle we had always paid attention to those whom the fortune of war had put into our power.

The settlement of the Army Accounts will be a laborious work, and it cannot be compleated, unless I have the pay rolls of every Company. I wish you therefore to order the Captain and Commanding Officers of Companies to make them out and send them to me as soon and as nearly agreeable to the inclosed form, as they can, the Officers and Men's pay to be calculated from the day of their inlistment to the day on which they died, were discharged, taken prisoners, deserted or reinlisted, without any regard to any former pay rolls which they may have sent in, or which may have been paid off; on the back of this roll an indorsement of what money has been received, by whom, from whom, when and where. And as many of the men, that may remain with you in Canada may have families in the country and may wish to have the money paid here, you will please to order the Captains or Officers Commanding Companies, to make a return of such men, for which I also inclose them a form. You will have so much business on hand that you will

[28]Richard Prescott (1725-1788), who was captured a second time in Rhode Island in 1777.

not be able to attend to this. I wish you therefore to appoint some person that is a good accountant to see this necessary work done, and to make him an allowance adequate to his services, for many of the Officers are incapable of doing this properly.

Be so good as to let me have a return of your new establishment, that we may be able properly to arrange the Officers to the Corps that may be raised here, to march into Canada as soon as the Lakes are passible, which I believe will consist of one thousand men, as the Gentlemen of the Committee[29] have agreed to report that number to Congress as necessary to be immediately raised.

When I mentioned to you to provide Clothing for the Troops, I concluded from the letter of Congress of the 12th of October, (Copy of which I did myself the honor to transmit you) that the clothing was not to be deducted from their pay, altho' I did not mention this. The Resolutions which I sent you on the 19th Inst. order a stoppage to be made. As I do not know what promises you may have made, I suggested to to the Gentlemen of the Committee, that it was necessary to say something to you on the subject. And they are unanimously of opinion that if the stoppages can be made, without running too great a risk of prejudicing the service, that it ought to be done, especially as a bounty of two months' pay is given, which altho' not mentioned in the Resolutions, for that purpose, was intended to enable the soldiers in Canada, to pay for the clothes and thereby to reimburse them for the stoppages to be made, and that upon the whole it is most adviseable to leave this matter to your discretion, not doubting but that Congress would acquiesce in your determination.

I now transmit you some additional Instruction of Congress, part of which you have already actually anticipated and others I dare say you have already determined on.

I make no doubt but that Capt: Lamb[30] will be properly provided for. I will do everything in my power for so good an Officer and have begged the Gentlemen of the Committee to second your recommendation.

---

[29]John Langdon, Robert Treat Paine and Eliphalet Dyer. Their instructions are in Journals of the Continental Congress (Ford), III, 339, and their report in Ib., 446.

[30]John Lamb (1735-1800).

I have made Honorable Mention of Colo: Easton to General Montgomery and transmitted an extract of your letter to Congress.

Inclose you some blank Commissions, as Mr. Lockwood[31] is now Brigade Major, the Commission intended for Dimon[32] is to go to him.

You will please to order all the Salt Petre in Canada to be purchased; I wish a prudent person to be employed in this business, that it may be as little known as possible, least it should induce the Canadians to think that we were in want of powder.

Please to let me know as soon as you conveniently can, what money you have advanced to the Connecticut or any other Troops and for what purpose.

General Washington has desired me to send all the Cannon and Military Stores that can be spared, to Boston, be so good as to let me know what you have in Canada and what you think will be wanted there beyond what you have.

I send the Sloop and Schooner back to St. Johns. One or the other of them I wish should bring the Horses that I sent Lieut: Thompson to buy. I am under the necessity of carrying Boats into Lake George, as I can get hardly any back from the South End of that Lake.

Please to fill up Commissions for Macpherson and Renss

The Gentlemen of the Committee will write you in few days. I am, Sir, with sentiments of Respect and Esteem, Your most Obedient and Very humble Servant,

PH: SCHUYLER.

General Montgomery.

[Memorandum] Tiond'a 30th Nov'r 1775. Gen'l Schuyler with N. 1. and 2. of 30th Nov'r 1775.

TAPPAN REEVE TO AARON BURR.[33]

STOCKBRIGE January 27th 1776.

DEAR BROTHER,—Amidst the lamentations of a Country for the loss of your brave enterprizing General your escape

---

[31]Lieut. Samuel Lockwood, of Waterbury's regiment.

[32]David Dimon, aide to General Wooster.

[33]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 75.

from such imminent danger to which you have been exposed has afforded us the greatest satisfaction. The news of the unfortunate attack upon Quebec arrived among us on the thirteenth of this month. I concealed it from your Sister untill the 18th when she found it out but in less than half an hour I received letters from Albany acquainting me that you was in safety and had gained great honour by your intrepid conduct. it gave us a kind of happiness that I should be very loth ever again to enjoy for it never can be the case untill you have again been exposed to the like Danger and have again escaped it which I hope may never happen. to know that you was in safety gave great pleasure it was heightned by hearing that your conduct was brave—could you have been crowned with success it would have been compleat. It was happy for us that we did not know that you was an Aid de Camp untill we heard of your welfare for we heard that Montgomery and his Aid de Camps were killed without knowing who his Aid de Camps was. whenever you can pray send me the particulars of that transaction. your Sister enjoys a midling state of health she has many anxious hours upon your account; but she tells me that as she believes you may serve your Country in the business in which you are now employed she is contented that you should remain in it. It must be an exalted publick Spirit that could produce such an effect upon a sister as affectionate as your's. As to news you will be acquainted with all we have before this reaches you. the present reinforcement for Canada as we understand it is one Regiment from Pensylvania two from New Jersey one from New York two from Connecticut one from the Massachusetts one from New Hampshire one from the Grants. our eastern privateers continue very successfull. the american squadron has sailed from Philadelphia their destination unknown. Your affectionate Brother,

T. Reeve.

I expect another opportunity by Capt. Seymour. Do not fail to write.

Charles Lee to David Wooster.

N. York, February the 28th, 1776.

Sir,—I am to inform you that I am appointed by the Continental Congress to the Command of the Troops in Canada.[34] I hope and dare say we shall agree well together. I must request you immediately to contract and grind into flour twenty thousand bushels of Wheat. I must also desire that you will suffer the Merchants of Montreal to send none of their woolen Cloths out of the Town. the post is just going out. I must therefore conclude, Sir, Yours,

Charles Lee,
Major General.

I have orderd twelve twelve pounders from Crown Point to Sorrel. I leave it to your discretion whether it would not be prudent before it is too late in the season to send em to the falls of Richlieu where it appears to me, you ought to establish a Post.

[Addressed] To Brigadier General Worcester, Montreal. On Public Service.

Address of Benedict Arnold.

Aux Habitans du District de Québec.

Vû la rareté actuelle des espéces d'or et d'argent, et les Dépenses excessives que nous sommes journellement obligés de faire pour l'entretien de notre Armée devant Québec, Nous avons jugé à propos de donner cours dans le public à une Quantité nécessaire de l'argent de Carton établi par Ordre de l'honorable Congrès, sur le Crédit universel des Colonies unies du Continent: Assurant par la présente Publication tous ceux à qui il appartiendra, que le dit Papier ou carton, ainsi issu par Ordonance du Congrès, aura libre Cours dans toute l'étendue de nos Colonies, et y sera reçu en payement selon sa Valeur nominale, ainsi qu'elle se trouve marquée sur le dit Papier ou Carton. Déclarons en outre par ces Présentes, que quiconque donnera Cours au dit Argent du Congrès, en recevra dans l'espace de 3 ou 4 Mois de la datte de la Présente, le Montant en Or et en Argent. Come au

[34] March 1 he was ordered to the Southern Department.

contraire, toute Personne qui refusera de le recevoir au Cours et sans aucun Décompte, sera consideré comme un Ennemi des Colonies unies, et traitté comme tel.

Donné sous notre signature et le sçeau de nos Armes au Quartier général ce 4e Mars 1776.

BENEDICT ARNOLD.

Brigadier General and Commander in Chief of the Army before Quebec.

DAVID WOOSTER TO HECTOR MCNEIL.[35]

Camp before QUEBEC, April 23d 1776.

DEAR SIR,—Your favour of yesterday I have received and say in answer, I still hope notwithstanding the infinite number of difficulties of every kind that we have to encounter from almost every quarter, that we shall be able finally to prevail. You observe very justly that every piece of duty is undertaken and executed with a strange indifference, that, too truly has been the case, ever since I have been here, indeed it has been an arduous task even to keep the troops upon the ground and I have hardly been able to have a single Order properly executed, almost every day discovers new traitors even in our bosoms who endeavour to frustrate all our designs. I have great reason to mistrust Cap'n Pepper. I shall therefore send him away prisoner with his vessel up the River. he has repeatedly broke his word and disappointed me in business which he has undertaken to perform and from many circumstances I have reason to believe he wished to have omitted.

Notwithstanding all these discouraging circumstances which are enough to make the heart of a man of sentiment and sensibility bleed for his country, yet let us make the best of our situation. I am confident that a few days will put a very different face upon our affairs. We certainly shall have in a very few days a large reinforcement of men artillery stores and I hope every thing necessary for our future opperations.

I'have ordered Cap'n Palmer to send off all the vessels from Point au Tremble up the River except the *Maria* which I shall immediately man and arm in such a manner as I hope she will be able to defend herself and perhaps do us some service below.

---

[35] A captain in the Continental Navy.

I shall be much obliged to you if you advise and direct such parties as may be sent to Point au Tremble in such a manner as you think conducive to the public safety, and all Officers of parties will obey your directions. I am Sir in haste with the greatest esteem and regard your sincere friend and very humble Servant,

DAVID WOOSTER.

My compliments to Mrs. McNeil and family.

P.S. Sir I understand by Cap'n Palmer and by Cap'n Church that the vessels have been neglected from a dispute among some of the Officers about who commands. I have now told them to take their orders from you. I beg, Sir, if your health will permit, that you would send for the Officers and direct each to his proper business that the vessels may immediately be got ready and sent off and they are hereby ordered strictly to obey your instructions as they will answer the contrary as disobedience of my Orders.

D. WOOSTER, B. Gen'l.

[Addressed] To Cap'n Hector McNeil, Point au Tremble. Per Cap'n Palmer. On the Service of the Colonies.

SAMUEL CHASE AND CHARLES CARROLL OF CARROLLTON[36] TO DAVID WOOSTER.

MONTREAL, 25th May, 1776.

SIR,—We think it would be proper for you to issue an order to the town Major to wait on the Merchants or others having provisions or merchandize for sale and request a delivery of what our troops are in immediate want of offering to give a receipt expressing the quantity delivered and engaging the faith of the united Colonies for payment, and on refusal we think our necessity requires that force should be used to compel a delivery.

Your most obedient humble Servants,

SAMUEL CHASE
CH. CARROLL OF CARROLLTON.

---

[36]Members of a committee of the Continental Congress.

William Paterson to Aaron Burr[37]

New Brunswick, July 22d, 1776.

My Dear Burr,—I did myself the pleasure of writing you by my brother, who is in General Sullivan's Brigade, and who was in expectation of seeing you, as he was destined for the Canada Department. Indeed from the Friendship which subsisted between us I was in expectation of hearing frequently from you; and, to tell the truth, was not a little mortified, that I was passed over in silence. Why Burr all this negligence? I dare not call it forgetfulness; for I cannot bear the thought of giving up my place in your esteem. I rejoiced at your return, and congratulate you on your promotion. I was attending the Convention at Burlington when you passed on to Philadelphia, and was full of the pleasing hope of having an interview with you;—the Delaware indeed ran between us; a mighty obstacle to be sure! I enquired when you designed to return, that I might plant myself at Bristol, and intercept you on your way. The enquiry was of no avail. I have at times been violently tempted to write you a railing letter; and for that purpose have more than once taken up the pen: but I can hardly tell how, on such occasions the Genius of Friendship would rise up to view, and soften me down into all the tenderness of affectionate sorrow; perhaps because I counted you as lost. I find I must e'en forgive you; but remember, you must behave better in future. Do write me now and then; your letters will give me unfeigned pleasure; and, for your encouragement, I promise to be a faithful correspondent. In the letter-way you used to be extremely careless; you know I am in that respect of a different turn.

This will be handed you by Mr. Hugg and Mr. Leaming, Members of our Convention, whom curiosity partly, and partly business have impelled to New York. As men they are genteel, sensible, and deserving; as politicians they are worthy of your regard, for they possess the genuine Spirit of Whiggism. They have no acquaintance in York; they are desirous of seeing the Fortifications, and other things in the military line: pray take them by the hand; and be assured, that any kindness

[37]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 83.

shewn them will be acknowledged as an additional obligation conferred upon your affectionate

WM. PATERSON.

Major Burr.

[Addressed] Major Aaron Burr, Aid-de-camp to General Putnam, New York. Favored by Messrs. Hugg and Leaming.

[Judge Paterson, Supreme Court U. States.]

ISRAEL PUTNAM TO MARGARET MONCRIEFFE

NEW YORK the 28 of July 1776.

DEAR MAM,—I must beag your pardon for not answoring your leators sooner but the reason was becaus I did not know how to giue you an answor, and not becaus Majr. Moncref did not giue me my titel for I dont regard that in the least but am willing to do him or any of his any kind offes lays in my power not with standing our political disputs for I know let his sentements be what they will he must fight and am well assured we shal fight sooner then giue up our Libertys acording to your desier I haue ben trieng to git leaue for you to go to Stratons Island for that eand haue waited one his Exelancy for liberty for you to go his answor was that when the larst flag was up hear that Collo paten said he had it in his power to offor to excheng marstor Louel for Gouenor Skeen the Ginrol had no power to excheng any prisnors without the leaue of Congres but would send to Congres for leaue and did not doubt but that thay would consent and he told me I might tel you that if thay did mak the excheng you might go with Gouenor Sken but would not seand a flag one porpose.

yestorday Majir Leauenston was hear and said you had a mind to com to New york but all th[e] lades of his acquantonc was gon out of town and asked my consent for your comming hear as Mir'st Putnam and two Daughtors are hear be assured if you wil com you shall be hartely welcom and I think much more likely to acomplesh the eand you wish for that is to see your father.

I am with the gratest respects yours etc.

ISRAEL PUTNAM[88]

---

[88]This is a holograph letter, but the letter that was sent, probably rewritten by Burr, is entirely different as may be seen by consulting the Memoirs of Burr, I, 88.

THEODORE SEDGWICK TO AARON BURR.[39]

SHEFFIELD 7 August 1776

MY DEAR BURR,—If you remember some eighteen months since you and I mutually engaged to correspond by letter. I told you then, and again repeat it that you was not to expect any thing either entertaining, or in any degree worth the trouble of perusing. what can any reasonable being expect from an inhabitant of such an obscure, remote, dead and dirty place as Sheffield to amuse, instruct or even to merit the attention of a young, gay, enterprising martial genius? I know you will expect nothing and I dare pawn my honor therefore that you will not either now or in future in this respect be disappointed.

You recollect perhaps that when I had the pleasure to see you here I informed you of a design to visit New York and the southward soon after, but my business immediately called me to Boston and on my return I was obliged to go with the Malitia to Peekskill, from there should have visited New York and my friends there had not some foolish accidents prevented. I now think (as soon as I can leave home) of making a tour there, but this like other futurities is wholly uncertain.

The very insignificant figure I make in my own opinion in this day of political and martial exertions is a very humbling consideration. to be stoically indiferent to the great events that are now unfolding is altogether inconsistent not only with my inclination, but even with my natural constitution, and to pursue a line of conduct which indicates such a disposition, I mean my continuance at home at this time, (destitute of business) is a mistery for which, (remember I mean not to libel the Colony to which I belong) I will endeavor to account. amidst the confusion which was at once the cause and consequence of a dissolution of Government, men's minds as well as actions became regardless of all legal restraint. all power reverted into the hands of the people, who were determined that every one should be convinced that the *People* were the fountain of all honor, the first thing they did was to withdraw all confidence from every one who had ever any connection with Government, the necessity of which was even called in

[39]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 92.

question. Lawyers were universally almost represented as the pest of society, all persons who would pay court to these extravagant and unreasonable prejudices became their idols. Abilities were represented as dangerous and Learning as a Crime or rather the certain forerunner of all political extravagances. they really demonstrated that they were possessed of creating power, *for by the Word of their Power they created great men out of nothing, but I cannot say that all was very well.* observing these violent symtoms, I could not persue that which was the only road to preferment, and I have never had an offer to go into the Army except the one I accepted, while I have seen in more than one instance men honored with the command of a Regiment for heading mobbs. well this poor stuff I believe has troubled you long enough. pray say you what is it to me why you have not been in the Army? why nothing my dear Friend, but it is something to me. you know my Dear Burr I love you or I should not submit such nonsence to your perusal. if Mr. Swift still lives give him my best compliments. Pamela desires me to tell you she loves you. Answer this letter and thereby oblige your sincere Friend,

THEODORE SEDGWICK.

[Memorandum] Theod. Sedgwick Aug. 7th 1776. Rec'd Aug. 11th N. York.

JOSEPH SPENCER TO DAVID WOOSTER

NORTH CASTLE,[40] 3d December, 1776

DEAR GENERAL,—I have sent a light horseman to know whether you have any further intelegence from the Enemy since yesterday. Trust that you reconnoiter the Estern or Seaside Road. I keep constant scouts out in the seuerval roads from the North River to the post road from White plain towards the Enemy. we have deserters from Rogers of late daly one or more, by their accounts he continues yet where he has been for some time which is about a mile and half from Kings bridge on the post road, the late accounts of the deserters is that he is about mouing but uncertain where.

I designd to have made you a visit before now so that we might have had oppertunity to have confer'd on the subject of

[40] Westchester county.

scouts and other proper measures of defence but as I am at present full of business and expect soon to moue, fear I shall not haue the pleasure of waiting on you soon. I am Sir your humble Servant,

Jos. Spencer.

M: Gen'l Worster.

Benjamin Lincoln to David Wooster and Samuel Holden Parsons.

North Castle, January 12, 1777.

Dear General,—The Massachusetts troops are fast collecting here. Matters are ripening. I expect we may soon proceed to Kingsbridge. It is of the greatest importance that the particular state of each division be known to the other. We therefore have forwarded this by express and beg to know what number you have and may in a day or two expect; What quantity of ammunition—What stores of provision and what are now your ideas of our intended expedition.

I have the pleasure to be here with General Scot who joins with me in wishing you the greatest happiness. Adieu Dear Sir,

B. Lincoln.

General Wooster and General Parsons.

William Heath to David Wooster.

Kingstreet, February 5th, 1777.

Dear Sir,—A grand Scout, a grand Forage is to be attempted to morrow morning. In order to effect the former, which is to be kept a secret, under the pretence of a piquet for the night, Col. Enos, Lt. Col. Root, 2 Captains 4 Subalterns, 8 Serjeants and 100 men from your Division, with one days provisions cooked, are to parade at such convenient place as you may think proper, so as to march and be at Stephen Wards precisely at one o'clock to morrow morning. They will be there joined by Major Bryant, and 280 men from General Lincoln's Division, and 120 under Major Pain from the New York Division. When Col. Enos will take the Command of the whole.

To effect the latter which is to take off if possible all the Forage in New Rochell, 300 men properly officer'd from your Division must by 8 o'clock tomorrow morning march and form a line between East Chester and Williams's in such manner as to secure the Foragers whilst taking off the Forage in New Rochell. They must continue formed until the teams are loaden and drove off. The Regiments nearest New Rochell who do not go on duty had best be kept near their Quarters, and ready to turn out if occasion should require it.

I am Dear Sir Yours respectfully,

W. HEATH.

Each man of both parties is to draw one jill of rum.

JOTHAM MOULTON TO DAVID WOOSTER.

NORTH STREET near WHITE PLAINS,

February 10th, 1777.

SIR,—A court of enquiry was appointed by his honor Major General Heath, to enquire into the conduct of Colo. Cook, on the 26 January last.

The Court met, and saw cause of adjournment; but by reason of the members being called into different departments, a sufficient number could not be obtained, to form a proper Court.

You will therefore please to conduct in such a manner, as you shall think most adviseable. I am Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant,

JOTHAM MOULTON, President of said Court.

[Addressed] Hon'ble Major General Wooster, Rye-Neck.

[Memorandum] Col. Enos, President.

Lt. Col. Henaker
Lt. Col. Gallup
Lt. Col. Root
Major Russell
} Members.

WILLIAM DUER[41] TO DAVID WOOSTER.

CROMWELLS, 7th March, 1777.

SIR,—We have received certain intelligence from good authority that 16 Light Horse and about 100 Footmen have

[41](1747-1799), a member of the Continental Congress.

been up yesterday about a mile above Phillipse's: as there is a considerable quantity of stock betwixt our Advanced Post at Wards, and Phillipse's which will probably fall into the Enemy's power unless removed in time, we beg the favor of you to detach 200 of the Connecticut Troops to Ward's House by 10 o'clock to morrow morning, to co-operate with us in moveing the stock. As the distance from Rye Neck to Wards is 10 miles it will be necessary that the Troops sett off on their march very early in the morning. I send a proper person to pilot the Detachment.

I am sir by Order and with respect Your obedient humble Servant,

WM. DUER.

[Addressed] To the Hon'ble Major Gen'l Wooster, Rye-Neck.

JAMES MITCHELL VARNUM TO AARON BURR[42]

Cakiat October 1st 1777.

SIR,—I this moment received your favor of this date. The Enemy have landed at Powler's Hook in great force. I am apprehensive they mean attacking fort Montgomery by the way of the Clove. I have sent my baggage and some forces there. The Enemy must be attended to. You will therefore halt in the nearest place that is convenient, upon the receipt of this. Keep a good lookout towards Newark, Elizabeth Town etc. or those places from whence they can march into Pumpton. Should you be in danger of being intercepted there, throw your party across the River in Pumpton, and defend the Bridge if practicable; If not, make the best retreat you can towards Morristown etc. But by no means proceed unless necessity urges, derived from the present object. In every thing else pursue your best discretion.

I am, Sir, your very humble Servant,

J. M. VARNUM.

Colo. Burr.

[Addressed] Lieut. Colonel Burr, on his March to Morristown.

[Memorandum] General Varnum 1 October 1777.

---

[42]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 118.

Thomas Conway to Aaron Burr[43]

25th October 3 o'clock in the evening.

Sir,—I have received a letter from Capt. Kearsley respecting the settlement of the ranks of the Captains and subalterns. I could not give him an immediate answer because I was then attending a court martial. I wish this matter was settled as soon as possible to the satisfaction of the officers of your Regiment. The General officers being employed in several courts martial which along with the camp duty will take up all their time I think you had best apply to the adjutant General know from him the manner in which the ranks of the Virginia and pennsylvania officers have been settled and arrange accordingly at least pro tempore the ranks of your gentlemen.

I am sir your most obedient humble Servant,

T. Conway.

[Addresses] To Lt. Col. Birr.

[Memorandum] 25th Oct. 1777. Gen'l Conway.

W. Malcom to Aaron Burr[44]

York Town, June 16th, 1778.

My Dear Sir,—I have just now met with Capt. Kiersley, which enables me to let you know that I here. Sent by General Gates to Congress on a variety of busseness.

I have consented to do duty as Ad'j General to the Northern Army, on conditions of holding my Regiment and that it should come to the Northward—the first agreed to, the last according to events.

Nine of the sixteen Ad'l Regiments stand on the new establishment—of the strongest. if our come within that description it will be one. As General Washington writes General Gates that he cannot conveniently spare you at this time, I recommend your sending three or four officers to the State of York on the recruiting service. You know who will answer best and who can be best spared. And to recruit for the Regiment at large. I think I can provide you with some men.

---

[43]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 119.

[44]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 125.

As I have not time either to pass thro' came or to write any other of the officers, do tell them how I am circumstanc'd, and offer them by best respects. I am happy to hear that Major Pawling is better.

I shall write from Pecks Kill very soon, and beg to hear from you. I ever am very sincerely, My Dear Sir, yours affectionately,

W. MALCOM.

[Addressed] Colonel Burr, Camp. Per favor of Capt. Kiersley.

LORD STIRLING TO AARON BURR.[45]

BRUNSWICK July 6th 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I have your letter of yesterdays date; The Court Martial of which I am president is adjourned to Morris Town which will oblige me to go there tomorrow; I must therefore desire you will direct your letters with such intelligence as you may procure, to his Excellency General Washington who will be on the line of march with the Army. I am in haste your most obedient humble Servant,

STIRLING.

Lt. Col: Burr.

General Washington desires me to add that he wishes you would employ three, four or more persons to go to Bergen heights Wesashack, Hoobouck or any of the heights there about convenient to observe the motions of the Enemy's shipping and to give him the earliest intelligence thereof, wether up the River particularly; in short every thing possible that can be obtained. Yours etc.

STIRLING.

[Addressed] To Lieut. Colonel Burr, Elizabeth Town.

BARON DE KALB TO W. MALCOM.[46]

Camp near CROTEN BRIDGE
July 19th 1778.

Col. Malcom's Regt. is orderd to march at two o'clock to morrow morning to the fort at west Point on Hudsons River

---

[45]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 129.
[46]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 131.

with the Regt. commanded by Lt. Col. Parker which it is to joyn on the Road near [*torn*] Bridge the Commander of these [*torn*] will make all convenent dispatch [*torn*] Ten miles a day as water and g[round] admit.

The BARON DE K[ALB].

[Addressed] To Commander Malcolm, [*torn*] Reg't, 9 o'clock P. M.

CERTIFICATE

State of New York.

A Flagg is hereby given to Lieut. Colo. Burr, or such other person as he shall appoint, to proceed to the City of New York or such other place within the Enemy's Lines as he may think proper, with the Sloop Liberty having on board the following persons Inhabitants of this State who affect Allegiance to the King of Great Britain, viz't William Smith, Cadwallader Colden Esqr. and Mrs. Rostiff I. Etting, four Negroe Slaves (two women and a child included), the Family of Wm. Smith Esqr. and a Son of Cad'r Colden Esq. who are to be landed and left within the Enemy's lines. The Sloop with the hands and attendants mentioned in the Margin to navigate her will return with all convenient expedition. Given at North Castle in Westchester County this 2d Day of August 1778.

Hands to navigate the Sloop viz. P. Webbers Man Abraham and Rupp, Hands Major Edwards two Servants three D'm and Fifes Attendants.

GEO. CLINTON, Gov'r of the State of N. York.

Captain Redman has permission to attend the Flagg on private business.

Mrs. Prevost and Miss De Visme with one Man Servant in consequence of Lord Stirling's Leave to pass to N. York and return are admitted on board this Flagg.

A. BURR.

John McDonald Man Servant of Wm. Smith is permitted to attend him and return with the Flagg.

[Endorsed] Flagg of Truce 2d August 1778.

WILLIAM LIVINGSTON TO JOHN LIVINGSTON.[47]

PRINCETON, 29th September, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—I am favoured with your kind letter of the 12th instant.

Whether Mr. Erkelens has studied the German Divines I know not. But he is certainly a very voluminous writer. In consideration however of the fairness of his character and his being a stranger; as well as from the respect which I shall always pay to your recommendations, I should not hesitate a moment to serve him in any way consistent with the attention due to my own character. As his affair is circumstanced, I do not know that I can be of any service to him. It will come to Congress by way of Appeal. His Counsel at Law will represent it in the most advantageous manner. The Congress must determine it according to its merits, and not the character of the [liti]gants. For in this instance also, "circumcision ava-[ileth] nothing, nor uncircumcision." And how far it would be proper for a third person to write on the subject to that Body, or to any of the Members (who collectively constitute the Court) is a point of great delicacy. But if I can be of any use to him in a way less exceptionable I shall befriend him with the greatest alacrity.

I am rejoiced to hear of Cozin Sally's recovery. She always was a favourite of mine, notwithstanding her manifold unmerciful pinches, to which both my arms can bear testimony; and two witnesses, you know, are sufficient in all Courts of Law and Equity.

Your letter really reminds me of old times; and I have a thousand things to tell you; but a thousand things, I have not leisure to *write*, leaving the scarcity of paper out of the question. Whenever it shall please God, that the British plunderers, like Judas Iscariot, shall go to their own place, I hope to see you in your ruinated Metropolis. But the rascals have so recently [set] themselves down in Bergen County (I hope they

---

[47]Gosuivus Erkelens came from Holland to America and offered to place a loan with Congress. That body declined, but mentioned him to Franklin, nothing came of his offer, but in 1787 he was residing at Chatham, Conn., possessed of a cobalt mine, in which he sought to interest Pennsylvania. Journals of the Continental Congress (Ford), XII, 1106, 1246. Calendar of the Franklin Papers, III, 340. There are many of his letters from 1779 to 1783 in the Trumbull Papers.

will teach mynheer Cuyper better divinity than he preached last year) and to all appearances, with such an *animo possidendi*, as if they still preferred this Country to their own. We have at least 3000 of our Militia in arms; but that is not sufficient, without continental succour, to dislodge them.

I have not been with my own family above two weeks in two years. The business I have gone through, the hardships I have borne, the lodging and diet I have been obliged to submit to, and the numerous strategems laid for my life, which I have escaped, are scarcely credible. Through all these scenes, I have not [had a] days indisposition, weariness, or discouragement [so] remarkably has Providence supported me (for which [I] can never be sufficiently thankful) and I trust in some measure, made me useful to my Country; tho' (or rather for which very reason) the Tories are ready to devour me and all. I am, Dear Sir, yours sincerely,

WILL LIVINGSTON.

The Rev'd Dr. John Livingston.

P. S. The inclosed covers some accounts and a letter from Philip P. Livingston with and to Philip I. Livingston, respecting their joint Estate in Jamaica, which were taken in a prize vessel, and delivered into our Court of Admiralty; and which you will please to forward to the owner as great a Tory as he is.

J. WADSWORTH TO AARON BURR.

PHILADELPHIA, October 26. 1778.

DEAR BURR,—Your favour of the 22d was just now handed me by Maj. Edwards. I wish you better health and need eno. to wish my selfe better. I am but so-so. shall set out for Elisabeth Town as soon as Congress will let me. I am more much more than tired of this place. I like your prescription will attend too it as soon as possible. my respectfull Compliments to Mrs. Peteeck and family and all other friends at E. T. I can fix no time to come their but it must it shall be soon adieu. God Bless You etc.,

J. WADSWORTH.

I am not in a hurry but Your Boy is.

[Addressed] Col. Aa. Burr, Elisabeth Town.

JAMES MONROE TO MRS. THEODOSIA PREVOST.[48]

PHILADELPHIA November 8th 1778.

A young lady who either is or pretends to be in love, is, you know, my dear Mrs. Provost, the most unreasonable creature in existence. If she looks a smile or a frown which does not immediately give or deprive you of happiness (at least to appearance) your company soon becomes very insipid. Each feature has its beauty and each attitude the graces or you have no judgment. But if you are so stupidly insensible of her charms as to deprive your tongue and eyes of every expression of admiration and not only to be silent respecting her but devote them to an absent object, she cannot receive an higher insult nor would she if not restrain'd by politeness refrain from open resentment. The mildest of the sex feel an involuntary resentment and cannot excuse such want of politeness. Upon this principle I think I stand excused for not writing you from B. Ridge. I propos'd it however and after meeting with opposition in which to obtain her point she promised to visit the little Hermitage and make my excuse herself, I took occasion to turn the conversation to a different object and plead for permission to go to France. I gave up in one instance and she certainly ought in the other. But writing a letter and going to France are very different you will perhaps say. She objected to it and all the arguments which a fond delicate unmarried lady could use she did not fail to produce against it. I plead the advantage I should derive from it; the personal improvement; the connections I should make. I told her she was not the only one on whom fortune did not smile in every instance. I produced examples from her own acquaintance and represented their situation in terms which sensibly affected both herself and Lady C. I painted a lady full of affection of tenderness and sensibility, separated from her husband for a series of time by the cruelty of the war; her incertainty respecting his health, the pain and anxiety which must naturally arise from it. I represented in the most pathetic terms the disquietudes which from the nature of her connection might possibly intrude on her domestic retreat

[48]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 184.

I then rais'd to her view fortitude under distress; cheerfulness, life and gaiety in the midst of affliction. I hope you will forgive me my dear little friend if I produc'd you to give life to the image. The instance she own'd was applicable; she felt for you from her heart and she has a heart capable of feeling. she wished not a misfortune similar to yours but if I was resolved to make it so she would strive to imitate your example. I have now permission to go where I please, but you must not forget her. she and Lady C. promise to come to the Hermitage to spend a week or two; incourage her and represent the advantage I shall gain from travel. But why should I desire you to do what I know your own heart will dictate; for a heart so capable of friendship feels its own pain alleviated by alleviating that of another. But do not suppose that my attention is only taken up with my own affairs. I am too much attached ever to forget the Hermitage. Mrs. Duvall I hope is recovering and Kitty's indisposition is that of my nearest relation. Mrs. De Visme tho plain and open has delicate nerves; tell me her children are well and I know she has a flow of spirits; for her health depends intirely on theirs.

I was unfortunate in not being able to meet with the Governor. He was neither at Elizabeth Town, B. Ridge, Princeton nor Trenton. I have consulted with several Members of Congress on the occasion. They own the injustice but cannot interpose. "The laws of each State must govern itself." They cannot conceive the possibility of its taking place. General Lee says it must not take place and if he was an absolute Monarch he would issue an edict to prevent it.

I am introduc'd to the gentl'n I wish'd by Gen'l Lee in a very particular manner. I cannot determine with certainty what I shall do till my arrival in Virginia.

Make my compliments to Mrs. and Miss de Visme and believe me with the sincerest friendship yours affectionately,

JAS. MONROE.

UDNY HAY TO AARON BURR.

FISH KILL 8th January 1779.

DEAR SIR,—I was favoured with your very oblidging letter of the 6th inst. and return to you my sincere thanks for your

offers of friendship; Give me leave to assure you of a reciprocal inclination in that way, and must therefore insist as my first request, should an opportunity offer, you will freely indulge this inclination by putting it in my power to serve you; unacquainted with ceremony, and an utter abhorrer of every thing that wears the complexion of formality, I love to speak and be spoken to in the plain and undisguised stile of Friendship, totally free from unmeaning compliment or deceitfull flattery.

Your letter for Mr. Reeve shall be taken particular care of.

As you have now got the Post of Honour, accept of my sincere wishes you may reap the laurels I believe you deserve.

Should it be convenient indulge me now and then with a news paper from York: You see I can already ask favours, nor can I conclude without begging one more, which is that you will believe me to be with real esteem, Dear Sir, Your most obedient and very humble Servant,

UDNY HAY.

[Addressed] Colonel A. Burr, commanding near White Plains.

ALEXANDER MCDOUGALL TO AARON BURR[49]

HEAD QUARTERS PEEKSKILL

January 15th 1779.

MY DEAR SIR,—Your favors of the 11th and 12th instant with sundry inclosures came duly to hand.

I am much mortified, that Captain Brown should have merited your putting him in arrest. But you have done your duty, for which accept my thanks.

If an officer commanding an outpost will not be very vigilant, he exposes his party to be butchered, as the unfortunate Colonel Baler lately experienced.

I am verry sorry, the Militia have conducted so disorderly; but I wish you to deal tenderly with them, as they are brave and are very sore, by the plundering of the Tories. But support the honor of our arms and you own, by giving redress to the innocent and helpless.

---

[49]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 144.

As the principal objects of your command are to protect the good people of these States, and prevent supplies going to the Enemy, you will not send out any parties, or make any excursions, but what are necessary for intelligence and the preservation of your parties, till further orders. Your own ideas on this subject fully meet my approbation.

In the mean time, let all the officers and men of your command, who are unacquainted with the ground, traverse it alternately, from flank to flank and as many miles in front as you may judge necessary.

The position of the whole, I leave to your own discretion, as circumstances shall arise.

A good Captain and twenty picked men of Nixon's, with two drums accompany this, to reinforce your left; and the orders are dispatched to Major Pawling for the Officers you wrote for.

One hundred pair of shoes will be sent to you by this snow.

Send up all Burgoyne's men, with a good corporal and small party of the nine months men, with the first deserters or prisoners.

The serjeant's parties of the Militia, who are to join you, will by their engagements be under the Continental Articles of war. If any of the Militia who may go out on scouts, or parties with your's, will not submit to the Articles of war and your orders, dont suffer them to go with them; nor to appropriate any plunder; but order it to be given to the Continental Troops, and those who shall submit to those Articles.

If any of the Militia marauder, send them up to me, with a guard. They must not be suffered to violate civil and military law. The Legislature is the proper authority, to enable them to make reprisals. For whatever disorders they commit in front of your lines, will be placed by the Enemy to your account.

In all doubtfull questions, which may arise on my orders as to the limit or legality of plunder, in your front, I authorise you, to be the *sole judge*. In the exercise of this trust, it is my wish, you should lean to the honor of our arms.

A surgeon is directed to attend your party; when he arrives, please to advise me of it, that I may be relieved from all anxiety about you, and your Corps.

If you are not supplied with rum, before a quantity of it arrives here, we shall not forget you.

If your Horsemen are mounted and appointed as well as your Horse Guides, they will receive the same pay.

If the oxen at Mr. Hunter's are not in working order, put them in the care of your Forage Master, till they are.

If you can get the articles taken from the inhabitants, in the late expedition restored; let the Militia off for that offence; when you get things in train, I flatter myself you will not have any future trouble with them. But the Officers of the Regular Troops, must be rigorously dealt with according to our martial Law.

As you and the Commissary will be in the rear of the whole, the nine months men, worse shod than the other troops may serve till I have more leisure to compleat your Corps.

Dont omit sending to me all the news papers you can procure.

I am so borne down with correspondence, I can only add, that I am Your affectionate humble Servant,

ALEX'R MCDOUGALL.

Lieut. Colonel Burr.

P. S. I fear the Piquets from your Parties are too far advanced from them. The distance ought not to exceed half a mile, at night. And the quarters of the Piquets should be changed every night, after dark—frequent patroles from each give the best security.

I submit it to your consideration whether it would not be of service, to have a quantity of old rags collected, at each party and piquet, for the Patroles to muffle their feet with in frosty weather, when there is no snow on the ground. It will prevent their being heared by the Enemy, and your's will hear those of the Enemy if there are any near them.

[Memorandum] Gen'l McDougall 15th Jan. 1779.

RICHARD PLATT TO AARON BURR.[50]

HEAD QUARTERS PEEKSKILL
February 25th 1779.

SIR,—The General wishes you to detain the best officers and men for five compleat parties of 60. And as soon as Major Hull can be made acquainted with your Posts and the nature of the Command, he desires you will ride up to Head Quarters if there is no probability of a movement from below, and he will concert with you such measures as shall be thought expedient.

The Combustible Balls are not yet come to hand. 5 or 6 Boxes of Ammunition will be sent down to Tarry Town by water the first opportunity.

'Tis necessary that Doctor Eustis, if not at the Plains, should be sent for. I am, Sir, Your most Obedient Servant,

RICHARD PLATT, Adjt.

P. S. Please to inform the General whether Col. Poor's men have accomplish'd the business they were sent upon, or not.

Lieut. Colonel Burr.

MRS. J[ANET] MONTGOMERY[51] TO AARON BURR.[52]

RYHNBEEK, March 7. [1779]

SIR,—I should before this have answer'd your obliging letter had not the marriage of my eldest sister intirely taken up my time.

I now return you Sir, many thanks, for your kind offers of service. the sincerity with which they were made, would have alowed me to accept them without fears of giving you trouble, had I not determined to run no more risques, as I have been very unfortunate in my ventures that way.

You have awakened all my sencibility, by the praises you bestow'd on my unfortunate General. He was indeed an angle lent us, for a moment. Alas! for me! that this world was not more worthy of him, then had I still been the happiest of women; and his friends in stations more equal to their merits. Reflections like these imbitters continually each day as it

[50]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 155.
[51]Mrs. Richard Montgomery.
[52]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 169.

passes, but I trust in the same Mercifull hand which has held me from sinking, in my extreem calamity, that he will still suport, and make me more worthy of a blessed meeting hereafter.

Can you excuse Sir the overflowings of a heart that knows not where to stop when on a subject so interesting.

Mr. Tatard tells me you mean to quit the Service. When ever that happens you will doubtless have leasure to pay us a visit, which I wish you to beleive will give real pleasure to Sir, your obliged,

J. MONTGOMERY.

[Addressed] Colonel Burr. To the care of Col. Hays, Fishkills. Rec'd Fishkill 21st March '79, and forwarded by Sir, your humble servant. S. Loudon. To the care of Gen'l McDougall.

[Memorandum] Mrs. Montgomery 7th March 1779.

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO MRS. THEODOSIA PROVOST.[53]

HEAD QUARTERS, MIDDLEBROOK
19th May 1779.

MADAM,—It is much to be regreted, that the pleasure of obeying the first emotions in favor of misfortune, is not always in our power. I should be happy, could I consider myself at liberty to comply with your request, in the case of your brother, Mr. Peter De Visme. But, as I have heretofore taken no direction in the disposal of marine prisoners, I cannot with propriety, interfere on the present occasion; however great the satisfaction I should feel in obliging, where you are interested. Your good sense will perceive this, and find a sufficient excuse in the delicacy of my situation.

I have the honor to be, Madam, Your most obedient and humble servant,

GEO. WASHINGTON.

Mrs. Provost.

[Addressed] Mrs. Provost, Hermitage, Paramus.

WILLIAM HULL[54] TO AARON BURR.

29 May 1779.

DEAR SIR,—Your favors of this day have just received. shall send Dyckman this afternoon. Am sorry you do not

[53] Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 186.
[54] (1753-1825), later a brigadier general in the war of 1812.

make me a visit, as the distance is small. Shall not trouble you with any dispaches to the eastward at present. Have this day applied to the General for permission to make a tour to Connecticut, and should it be granted, shall hope to see you at Hartford. If not, must beg you to mention me to any acquaintance of both sexes as affectionately as it is possible for them to ask after me. The ground you so long defended is now left to the depredation of the Enimy, and our friends in distressing circumstances. However they have good spirits, and are determined to defend themselves.

Since you left me, have had an excellent body of troops, armed and accoutred in the best manner. Am now at the Mouth of Croton with only two Companies. I am Dear Sir with much esteem your very humble Servant,

WM. HULL.

[Addressed] Col. Burr, Peekskill.

ARTHUR ST. CLAIR TO AARON BURR[55]

Col. Burr being on urgent public business, must be put across the Ferry to Fish Kill[56] Landing without a moments delay. Given at Pompton 3rd June 1779.

A'R ST. CLAIR, MAJ'R GEN'L.

The Qr. Master and Commissary, at Newbury or N. Windsor will receive and observe as my orders, the verbal directions delivered by Col. Burr. Given at Pompton 3d June 1779.

A'R ST. CLAIR, *Maj'r Gen'l.*

[Memorandum] Genl. St. Clair 3rd June 1779.

---

[55]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 172-173.

[56]Noted on the back of these commissions, in the same hand writing is the following: The original Design of the Enemy was probably an Attack on the Forts in the Highlands. The Spirit of the Country (which is really to be admired) the Delay occasioned by contrary Winds, and rapid Approach of our Men rendered this design abortive. Part of the Enemies Force (it is said those who were on the Virginia Expedition) have returned to York—sixteen Sail lay still in Haverstraw Bay and near it—no very large Ships among them—the Enemy lay on both sides Kings Ferry—are erecting on each side a Work evidently with Design to maintain a secure Post at Kings Ferry—300 Men may keep an Army at Bay for many Weeks several of the new Corps with all the Horse lay at and near Dobbs Ferry—Gen. Washington is this Day at the Forts—near the Army in the Clove—upwards of 4000 Militia of this State are now in Service—The civil officers and Exempts of every kind are out with their Knapsacks and Muskette—this has a happy Effect on the People.

[Memorandum] Genl. St. Clair 3rd June 1779.

Robert Troup to Aaron Burr.[57]

Princeton, April 27. 1780.

My dear Burr,—I wrote to you yesterday and happened to put the letter into the Post Office a little after the post had gone. In that letter I requested you to come here as soon as possible for it was highly probable that I should leave Princeton entirely and determine to follow our original plan. The event has confirmed my conjecture. I came here from General Morris's yesterday and exerted all the influence I was master of to get new lodgings; but could not, without lodging in the town which would be disagreeable to me on many accounts. I have now given over all thoughts of staying here and having an excellent pretext for changing my ground I shall write to Mr. Stockton who is still in Philadelphia and acquaint him with my intentions of going away. Nothing is therefore wanting but yourself with a horse and chair to make me completely happy. I wish to God I could push off eastward immediately but I cannot. I have no horse, neither is it practicable to borrow or hire one. I must then wait for you and I request you in the most pressing terms to lose not a moment's time in coming for me at General Morris's about six miles from this at Sourland near Colonel Vandyke's Mill on the road to Somerset where I shall wait impatiently for you. I am extremely uneasy lest this should reach you after you have left home and begun your journey northward. In that case I shall be very unfortunate and to prevent too great a delay I shall write to Mr. Reeves at Litchfield and enclose him a letter for you and desire him to forward it to you wherever you are with all expedition. I shall likewise enclose another letter for you and send it to Mrs. Prevost who will be kind enough to give it to you the moment you arrive there.

If we once get together I hope we shall not be soon parted. It would afford me the greatest satisfaction to live with you during life.

How shall I have my trunk transported to the eastward? On this and many other matters I shall want to consult you when we meet. God grant our meeting may be soon. Adieu!

---

[57] Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 199.

You have my best and fervent wishes for the recovery of your health and every other happiness. My compliments to all friends.

ROB. TROUP.

P.S. I can't think of studying [until] I am settled with you. Col. Burr.

[Addressed] Col. Aaron Burr at Mr. Titus Osmer's, Middletown, Connecticut. Per post.

[Memorandum] R. Troup, 27th Apl. Rec'd F. Field 12th May. post.

SILAS DEANE TO BARON ROTTENBOURG.

PARIS November 15th 1780.

SIR,—I received your letter of the 25th ulto. only two days since, and should have replied to your former in course had it been in my power to do it satisfactorily, which it was not, nor unhappily is at present. I know that the State of New York have passed an Act for the Sequestration of Estates of certain Absentees who have joined the Enemy, but how extensive the Act is, I do not know. when I left America (I had remained for six months in Virginia previous to my sailing) I had not heard of any estates having been put to sale. I have not nor can I procure a copy or abstract of their Act, nor have I ever seen it. I presume, however, that your readiest way to proceed, is to go direct to America, and apply to the Government of New York; or if you cannot do that to send over to the Governor a State of your Claim and inform of your intentions of settling and of becoming a subject of that State as soon as possible.[58]

The Manufacture of Salt Petre is certainly an object of very considerable importance, and I think must at all times answer well in America, every new branch of manufacture and commerce introduced is of real service to a new country like America; and therefore I wish you to succeed in your attempts of that kind. I have the honor to be with respect, Sir your most obedient and very humble Servant,

S. DEANE.

[Addressed] A Monsieur Le Baron Rottenbourg, ancien Colonel et actuellement directeur des Vitrières Royales à Mont Aimart en Dauphiné.

[58] In 1786 the Baron wrote to Franklin about some lands in New York state owned by his brother-in-law Charles Williams, "lately deceased."

Certificate of Marriage.[59]

I do hereby certify that Aaron Burr of the State of N. York Esqr. and Theodosia Prevost of Bergen County, State of N. Jersey widow were by me joined in lawful wedlock on the second day of July instant. Given under my hand this sixth day of July 1782.

B'n Van Der Leude.

John Sloss Hobart to Aaron Burr.

Dear Sir,—I had taken a present my sincerest congratulations on the event[60] which Fredrick this moment announced to me, which I do most heartily, when gov'r Clinton desired me to present you his compliments of felicitation on the occasion and to inform you that the pressing sollicitude of the Commander in Cheif to prevent all communication with New York renders it altogether improper for him to comply with your request at present. he would have written to you himself but is very much hurried as the Legislature is on the point of adjourning.

It is so dark I can scarcely see sufficient to assure you that I am with the warmest esteem, Your most obedient Servant,

John Sloss Hobart.

Coll. Burr.

[Addressed] Coll. Aaron Burr. Mr. Provost.

General Samuel H. Parsons to Captain Thomas Wooster.

25th November, 1782.

Sir,—I have left ninety pounds for you which comes to 405£ if I have computed right @ 4/6. if you can send me 200£ or 250£ more at the same rate I believe I can give you the money in about a month. I have left a receit with my wife which you will please to sign on receiving the money, and leave me a line whither I may depend on 200 or 300£ more: and when that I may not disappoint you in the cash: I shall know this week when I can have the lands and will inform you to provide for that event in season.

I am Sir Your obedient Servant,

Sam'l H. Parsons.

---

[59]Parton states that the marriage was performed by Rev. David Bogart—obviously an error in the light of the above certificate.

[60]This refers, no doubt, to Burr's marriage, July 2d, 1782.

P. S. The notes for this money must be had by the last of next week: if you cant procure them by that time: I must not take them as the money or notes must be returned to the owner by that time. you will know whither you can take the money on that condition.

S. P.

32 half Joannes	£76.16
44 Dollars	13: 4
	£90: 0

I have sent you £90.0.0 if you cant comply with the time as above expressed you will please to return it. Yours,

S. H. Parsons.

Samuel Alleyn Otis to Aaron Burr.

Mr. Otis's Compliments to Coll Bur and Lady and thanks them for their polite reception of him at Albany.

Should it comport with their convenience or pleasure nothing would make him more happy than an opportunity of returning their civilities at Boston, and hopes the apprehensions of the river becomeing unpassable from the approaching warmth of the day will be his apology for an early and uncermonious departure.

Saturday Morning, [March, 1783].

My Dear Sir

I was closeing the within when your smileing lovely boy handed yours of this morning and am mortified at the trouble I have given him and yourself. be assured Sir a heart easily impressed with friendly offices, will not forget yours, and the fresh obligations you lay me under. I had such a character of Mrs. Burr as induced me to expect the graces of a most amiable person in your good Lady. I think better of the world for giveing the tribute of praise where am convinced from my own observation it belongs.

Present me with every expression of respect and esteem to her.

You know my original plan was to be early in the week at Pittsfield. Some appointments of business must be observed.

Which as I travel slowly will be my apology for not returning. But in the pleaseing expectation of meeting you at Cloveric am

Your most humble Servant

SAM A. OTIS

JAMES RIVINGTON TO AARON BURR.

N. YORK Oct. 1. 1783.

Permit me, Good Sir, to apply to you for a copy of the Indictment preferred against me. I wish to see its purport before I leave N. York, which I intend to do on the 16th Inst. I wrote to you some time since but my letter was not properly directed. I am, Sir, Your obedient Servant.

JAMES RIVINGTON.

[Addressed] Aaron Burr Esq., Attorney-at-Law, at Albany.

Tuesday Evening [May , 1785.][61]

Mrs. Wickham just called to tell me of an opportunity to Chester, how joyfully I embrace it. I had a most insupportable impatience to communicate to you my gratitude and thanks for your last visit, it was a cordial to my health and spirits, a balm to my soul. my mind is flushed with pleasing hopes—ten thousand tender thoughts rush to my pen, but the bearer may prove faithless. I will suppress them to a happier moment, and anticipate the dear indulgence.

The holidays are a check to finishing, the family as you left it, Their health and spirits encrease daily. B. industry and utility is striking to the family and strangers. Johnston returned yesterday. your letter was as eagerly read as tho' I had not seen you. write when you have leisure, if it does not reach me immediately it will serve to divert some tedious moment in a future absence—even when you are at home engrossed by business, I frequently find a singular pleasure in perusing those testimonies of affection. I find I am continually speaking of myself. I can only account for it from Aaron's having persuaded me 'tis his favorite subject, and the extreme desire I have to please him enduces me to pursue it. I take no walks but up one stairs and down the other, the situation of my house will not admit of my seeing many

[61]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 260.

visitors. I hope some arrangements will be accomplished by the next week.

A packet from Sill. he writes like a happy man, not the happy man of a day, or I am much deceived in him. She is certainly to be ranked among the fortunate. I wish she may be sensible of her lot.

I have fixt the time of seeing you till saturday. I will hope the best. I cannot extend my calculations beyond it, four days of your absence is an age to come. don't be too solicitous pour la visite d'une jeune personne. J'en suis parfaitement dégoûtée, evites la c'il est possible. My compliments to your chum, and who else you please. penses avec tendresse de

la votre.

[Addressed] Aaron Burr.

[Memorandum] Sop:—May 85. Chester.

Tuesday Evening, [27th Sept. 1785].[62]

I have counted the hours till evening, since that the minutes and am still on the watch the stage not arrived; 'tis a cruel delay your health, your dear health your tender frame how are they supported? anxiety obliterates every other idea, every noise stops my pen, my heart flutters with hope and fear, the pavement from this to Capes are kept warm by the family—every eye and ear ingrossed by expectation—my mind in too much trepidation to write. I resume my pen after another messenger in vain. I will try to tell you that those you love are well, that the Boys are very diligent, Ireson gone to West Chester. My new medicine will I flatter myself prove a lucky one. Sally amazingly encreased Fream at work at the roof, he thinks it too flat to be secured. The back walls of the house struck thro' with the late rain. M. Y. still at Miss W. You must not expect to find dancing on Thursday night, I should think it a degree of presumption to make the necessary preparations without knowing the state of your health. Should this account prove favorable, I still think it best to delay it as the stage is very irregular in its return, that of Saturday did not arrive till Sunday morning. brought an unfavorable account of the roads. thus you prob-

[62] Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 271.

ably would not partake, nor would I wish spectators to check my vigilance, or divide that attention which is ever insufficient when thou art the object. O! my Aaron how impatient I am to welcome thy return, to anticipate thy will, and receive thy loved commands.

The clock strikes eleven, no stage. My letter must go. I have been three hours writing or attempting to write this imperfect scrawl. The Children desire me to speak their affection. Mamma will not be forgot, she really shares my anxiousness. Tout jour plus ardentement

la votre.

[Addressed] Aaron Burr Esqr., Albany,[63] per stage.

ELISHA BOUDINOT TO AARON BURR.

NEW ARK 18 June, 1789.

SIR,—Mr. Warmsly has returned from Mr. Ogilvie who insists upon the Execution of Schoonmaker's being discharged first. Will you therefore be kind enough to send by Mr. Burnet a calculation of the debt and costs due on that execution, as they are to meet on Saturday to endeavor to settle it.

I am with esteem, Dear Sir, Your most Obedient Servant,

ELISHA BOUDINOT.

Col. Burr.

[Addressed] Col. Aaron Burr, Counsellor-at-law, New York. Favored by Mr. Burnet.

TO MRS. AARON BURR

Philada, 26th Apr, 1792

I have at length the pleasure to assure you that both houses of Congress have concurred in a resolution to adjourn on the fifth of May, which is I think Saturday of next week. I could have wished an earlier day, yet it is a great relief to me to look forward to a certain time. I was so fortunate as to have been in Senate Yesterday to promote this desireable object.

The mail which left you on Tuesday Morning brought me no letter from you, of which indeed I need not to inform you, it is not amiss however that you should know the disappointment to me.

---

[63] The word "Albany" is crossed out and "New York" written in another hand.

Mr. and Mrs. Adams left this place on Tuesday and will be in New York about the time this will reach you. You will not forget the rest.

My Confessor is to be with me this Morning to settle terms.

Most Affect. Yrs.

A. BURR.

I have formed some very hostile resolutions if you do not continue the Use of certain remedies:—resolutions which are perhaps most easily formed, and kept, at the Distance of 100 Miles.

Mrs. Burr, No. 4 Broadway,
New York.

BENJAMIN RUSH TO AARON BURR.[64]

PHILADELPHIA, September 24th, 1792.

DEAR SIR,—This letter will be handed to you by Mr. Beckly. He possesses a fund of information about men and things, and what is more in favor of his principles, he possesses the confidence of our two illustrious patriots Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison.

The republican *ferment* continues to work in our State, and the time I think is approaching very fast when we shall universally reprobate the maxim of sacrificing public justice and national gratitude to the interested ideas of stockjobbers and brokers whether in or out of the legislature of the United States.

Your friends every where look to you to take an active part in removing the monarchical rubbish of our government. It is time to *speak out*—or we are undone. The Association in Boston augurs well. Do feed it by a letter to Mr. S. Adams. My letter will serve to introduce you to him, if enclosed in one from yourself.

Have you got the deed completed? I hope nothing will prevent an issue being given to that business this fall.

Mrs. Rush joins in best Compliments to Mrs. Burr with Dear Sir, Yours sincerely,

BENJAMIN RUSH.

P.S. Mr. Burke left the lodgings you looked at last saturday.

[Addressed] Aaron Burr Esqr., New York. Mr. Beckley.

[64]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 316.

Thomas Jefferson to Aaron Burr.[65]

Th. Jefferson presents his respectful compliments to Colo. Burr and is sorry to inform him it has been concluded to be improper to communicate the correspondence of *existing ministers*. he hopes this will, with Colo. Burr, be his sufficient apology.

Jan. 20, 1793.

[Addressed] Colo. Burr.

Albert Gallatin to Aaron Burr[66]

[1794]

Dear Sir,—I send you the Massachusetts Laws from 1692 to 1768. Page 125 and 126 is the law which admits persons to become inhabitants upon twelve months residence if not warned. A preceeding law page 21 had made it only three months and [althoug]h repealed defines the word *residing*. Read also the law page 289. Strong said that the law of 1701 page 126 was virtually repealed by a certain temporary law of 1767 which he had not. I strongly suspect the accuracy of his information on that head; And I believe that the law of 1789 is the first which made a change and also introduced the distinction of Citizens. German Servants must have acquired settlement in common with others and many were imported. See page 342. You will find page 122 the word Inhabitant used with that of *Sojourner* in a general sense. Page 338 the same word applied to inhabitant of a County etc. A distinction is made between inhabiting and residing pages 24 and 207. I have not New Hampshire laws.

The Laws of Pennsilvania are clear and explicit. Please to compare the attachment laws in volume of Provincial laws page 44 and 122 with Laz. Barnet's case Del. reports which is grounded upon them and you will find that under the province residing and inhabitants were synonimous.

In Vol. of State Laws, please to read page [*burned out*] Sect. 2d. says all male white inhabitants and sect. 7th by the exception sheweth the general meaning of the word inhabitant. Page 163 read the 5th Sect. principally and you will find it to

---

[65]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 1, p. 331.

[66]Ib. p. 406.

be a copy of the Art. of Conf. substituting white for free. I will call on you about ten o'clock. Yours,

A. G.[67]

[Addressed] Colo. Burr, Corner of 4th and Walnut Streets.

RICHARD PLATT TO AARON BURR

NEW YORK January 12th 1797.

DEAR SIR,—My prospects detailed you in yesterday's letter relative to money for the two houses mentioned, are realized. I am to receive two hundred Guineas this week—the residue in 30 and 60 days in unexceptionable paper. Thus I am relieved on that head, and now wait only for the maturing other things, and the sailing of the Vessell, which I apprehend cannot take place for a week to come, owing to the ice in the Harbour. This induces a hope that we shall meet again before my departure. If we should not, you must get, give and send after me such letters as will assist my operations and views in France, from your friends. I have nothing more to tell you about this day, only that Mrs. P. is better, and Miss A. very well—both desire regards, with your affectionate,

RICHARD PLATT.

Write me always under cover to John Aspinwall.

[Addressed] Aaron Burr Esquire, Senator in Congress, Philadelphia. Post.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON TO AARON BURR.

DEAR SIR,—As I wished the cause of Bayard vs Breese and others to be regularly at issue and as the Chancellor could not readily be come at to procure from him an order to serve Subpoenas on the Clerk in Court, I sent you a request some time since to file rejoinders and Mr. Provost informed me you would be so obliging as to have it done. I have not, however, received any notice of its having been done. I will thank you

[67]Noted on this letter is the following:

"Mr. Taylor of Virginia to Col. Burr, in a note across the Table in Senate U. States, in the case of Gallatin says—

" 'We shall leave you to reply to *King*: 1st. Because you desire it; 2d. All depends upon it. No one else *can do it*, and the audience will expect it. If, too, you will see the 2d page of the Kentucky Constitution, it may be pressed upon Edwards. Gallatin has it in manuscript.'

"The preceding *two pages*, are in the hand writing of Albert Gallatin, as the initials to the letter show.

M. L. DAVIS."

particularly to have it done in the course of the day, as my situation has rendered me culpably negligent.

Your Obedient Servant,

ALEX'R HAMILTON.

Thursday. [1797]

[Addressed] Aaron Burr Esquire.

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO AARON BURR.[68]

WASHINGTON, Dec. 15, 1800.

Dear Sir

Although we have not official information of the votes for President & Vice President and cannot have until the first week in Feb. yet the state of the votes is given on such evidence as satisfies both parties that the two Republican candidates stand highest. from S. Carolina we have not even heard of the actual vote; but we have learnt who were appointed electors, and with sufficient certainty how they would vote. it is said they would withdraw from yourself one vote. it has also been said that a General Smith of Tennissee had declared he would give his 2d. vote to Mr. Gallatin; not from any indisposition towards you, but extreme reverence to the character of Mr. G. it is also surmised that the vote of Georgia will not be entire. yet nobody pretends to know these things of a certainty, and we know enough to be certain that what it is surmised will be withheld will still leave you 4 or 5 votes at least above Mr. A. however it was badly managed not to have arranged with certainty what seems to have been left to hazard. it was the more material because I understand several of the high flying federalists have expressed their hope that the two republican tickets may be equal, & their determination in that case to prevent a choice by the H. of R. (which they are strong enough to do) and let the government devolve on a President of the Senate. decency required that I should be so entirely passive during the late contest that I never once asked whether arrangements had been made to prevent so many from dropping votes intentionally as might frustrate half the republican wish; nor did I doubt till lately that such has been made.

[68]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," Vol. 2, p. 67.

While I must congratulate you, my dear Sir, on the issue of this contest, because it is more honourable and doubtless more grateful to you than any station within the competence of the chief magistrate, yet for myself, and for the substantial service of the public, I feel most sensibly the loss we sustain of your aid in our new administration. it leaves a chasm in my arrangements, which cannot be adequately filled up. I had endeavored to compose an administration whose talents, integrity, names & dispositions should at once inspire unbounded confidence in the public mind, and ensure a perfect harmony in the conduct of the public business. I lose you from the list, & am not sure of all the others. should the gentlemen who possess the public confidence decline taking a part in their affairs, and force us to take up persons unknown to the people, the evil genius of this country may realize his avowal that 'he will beat down the administration.'—the return of Mr. Van Benthuysen, one of your electors, furnishes me a confidential opportunity of writing this much to you, which I should not have ventured through the post office, at this prying season. we shall of course see you before the 4th of March. accept my respectful & affectionate salutations.

Th. Jefferson

Colo. Burr

[Addressed] Colo. Aaron Burr, New-York.

Ambrose Spencer to Aaron Burr.

Hudson December 24. 1800.

Dear Sir,—Permit me to express to you my most cordial congratulations, on the successful issue of your and Mr. Jefferson's election. I have and do consider these events as among the greatest incidents of the age. they are clearly indicative of the abhorrence of the people of America, to the system adopted by our political adversaries—a system which if not totally changed could not have failed of destroying our excellent republican government, and on its ruin of establishing at least an aristocracy. The system pursued too, was vile in many other respects, and particularly as it tended to exclude from office, all but sycophants and political hypo-

crites. But thank Heaven the scence [scene?] is changed, and the men of our party who have been degraded and oppressed, will be entitled to be heard and noticed. imagine not however that I mean myself to be included in these observations. persecuted I have been, oppressed I could not be, and as for office had I the capacity to fill any (which I am sensible I have not) I will accept of none in the gift of the general government, nor of any office from the Governor and Council of this State. Nor is it probable that I shall ever trouble my friends for others—for my own connections I surely shall not. The joy inspired by the event of the election is indiscribable, amongst our Friends, the other party are literally chap fallen. It would please me to hear from you if any thing of consequence transpires, and especially on the subject of Mr. Lees certificate.

believe me to [be] yours with much respect,

A. SPENCER.

Col. A. Burr.

[Addressed] Aaron Burr Esquire, Counsellor-at-Law, New York.

JOSEPH ALSTON TO THEODOSIA BURR.

CHARLESTON S. C.

Dec. 26th 1800

I have this instant, My dear Theodosia,[69] received your anxiously expected letter of the 11th December and just snatch the pen to thank you for it, and tell you how much pleasure it gives me.

Had I an hour to spare, I would convince you of the propriety of early marriages, in spite of the authority of even Aristotle; I would shew you how rediculous are the accounts of your "dear friends" respecting Carolina; and in short reply satisfactorily to every part of your letter; but in half an hour I expect a large company of Republicans to dinner, and, as my Father and family are out of town, and I keep "Bachelor's hall," I must be ready to receive them. The next post, however, I promise you a folio epistle. Adieu. I am delighted. Your letter shows you every thing that the most

[69]Theodosia Burr was born at Albany June 21, 1783 and was baptised July 28. She married Joseph Alston January, 1801.

ardent lover of a disposition like mine, could desire. Yours My dear Theodosia, always

JOS. ALSTON.

[Addressed] Miss Burr, New-York.

THEODOSIA BURR TO JOSEPH ALSTON

The books and note were received with pleasure; the latter would have honored Petrach as much as it would have flattered Laura. I shall not leave town to day and if you should not be otherwise engaged Mrs. Provost and myself have disposed of you for this afternoon.

THEODOSIA T. B[URR].

Saturday. [1801]

[Addressed] Mr. Alston.

CHARLES PINCKNEY TO AARON BURR[70]

GEORGE TOWN Saturday Morning [1801]

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Murray a gentleman whom I knew in South Carolina where he was a Member of our Legislature wishes to have an introduction to you and as I have had a request from Doctor Blyth one of our Electors in favour of this gentleman I take the liberty of recommending him to your notice—he will explain to you. the reasons of delicacy I mentioned to you, prevent me from writing the President on applications of this sort and I must apologize for taking the liberty with you. With great respect and esteem I am, dear Sir, Yours truly,

CHARLES PINCKNEY.[70]

[Addressed] The Honourable Aaron Burr, Vice President of the United States.

EDWARD LIVINGSTON TO MATTHEW L. DAVIS

WASHINGTON, February 5, 1801.

MY DEAR SIR,—If I have omitted writing to my friends it has been hitherto that I might not amuse them with vain conjectures instead of satisfying them with such facts as might be

[70](1758-1824). He was prominent in Carolina politics at this time, having left his associates, the Federalists, to be the leader of the republican party in the State, the party which favored Jefferson. Pinckney became United States Minister to Spain, and, though able, never attained the reputation which his earlier years promised to give him.

a justification for the serious steps which untill within a few hours I have thought it might be necessary to take. I have no longer any apprehension on that score. I can now speak with some degree of confidence and have great pleasure in assuring you that all the little intrigues of falling ambition all the execrable plans of violence and usurpation will in a few hours after you read this be defeated by the election of Mr. Jefferson—eight States, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, N. C., Tennessee, Kentucky and Georgia and an equal division of Maryland and Vermont were pledged never to yield the wishes of the people to the cabals of a faction—this determination was known and its effects foreseen. A member from the opposite side of one of the divided States has already pledged himself to decide the vote of his State in our favor—there is great probability that another from the remaining divided State will follow his example, and as I can not learn that the Representative from Delaware has firmly entered into the views of his party, I think it probable that he too will join our ballot.

You may I think rely as fully on this information as on any that the nature of the case will admit. I place implicit confidence in it myself on [and?] look on the result as certain. but if any unforeseen event should disappoint our hopes and wishes, you may rest assured that our City shall never be disgraced by any temporising plan or acquescence in usurpation on the part of its representative and I think I may without danger give this pledge for all those with whom he acts.

The President has called the Senate for the 4th of March. What the object is can only be got at by those who study the doctrine of chances for no other principles than those which govern the turn of a die will apply to the caprice of his politics. If you should see Mr. Warner I pray you to tell him that I shall be enabled in a day or two to send him some accounts of the fate of the Mechanics Memorial. Greet all my friends in the transfer Coffee House for me, and believe me with true regard, Your friend and fellow Citizen.

EDWARD LIVINGSTON.

JONATHAN RUSSELL TO AARON BURR.

PROVIDENCE, 26 June, 1801.

SIR,—Agreeable to my last reports to you I waited on Mr. Lincoln[71] at Worcester. He received me with sufficient urbanity but did not leave me long in the dark as to your motive in advising caution. Whether the promotion of Mr. Barnes was in fact, a piece of *favouritism* on the part of Mr. Lincoln, or he felt himself committed in the very singular letter he wrote, and which accompanied the commission, to Mr. Barnes I will not pretend to decide; but certainly he appeared anxious to apologize for what was done and insinuated that the imputation of levity might attach to administration by an alteration of the arrangement. On my part I was too explicit to be misunderstood. I know not whether I made an impression favourable to our views or not, but Mr. Lincoln engaged that in the interview he might have with Mr. Barnes nothing should escape him, incompatible with our wishes. The letter which I have since written him, a copy whereof you will find inclosed, will enable you to ascertain the actual state of my communications with him better than any history of the business could do.

The representation with respect to Ellery[72] is suspended for the present. His nephew, the senator,[73] had an influence in this measure. This man you will find very managable, altho he will need the rein rather than the spur. There is another representation on foot relative to Lyman, the naval officer at New Port, but I believe no charge of misconduct in office can be urged against him. The Mr. Gardner who is proposed for his successor is a republican and I believe a very good man but he is not qualified to discharge the duties of the office with more ability and *exactitude* than the present incumbent.

As Timothy Greene Esquire will be here before I embark I will not detain you with further details but reserve myself till his arrival, when, if you should not object to my communicating thro' him, I will take the liberty of stating some matter

---

[71] Levi Lincoln (1749-1820), attorney general under Jefferson.

[72] William Ellery (1727-1820), collector of the port of Newport From 1790 to his death.

[73] Christopher Ellery (1768-1840).

worthy of consideration and which requires to be managed with some skill and delicacy.

I am, with the most respectful considerations, Your very humble Servant,

JONA. RUSSELL.

Aaron Burr, Vice-President of the United States.

[Addressed] Aaron Burr, Vice President of the United States, New York.

ELBRIDGE GERRY TO AARON BURR.

CAMBRIDGE 18th September 1801.

DEAR SIR,—This will be delivered by Colo. Lee, a fellow soldier whose merits and general character are so well known to yourself, as to require no information on my part. as his object however is to apply for the collectorship at Salem, if according to his information it should be vacant, I cannot refrain from observing, that I have known Colo. Lee from his early youth, and do not conceive, that in the County of Essex, of which we are natives, there is a person who will offer himself as a candidate, with better pretensions in regard to his moral, political, and military character, and his public services, than those of Colo. Lee. his politicks are and always have been truly republican, and his abilities are fully equal and indeed superior to the office. but my opinion of him, I wish to be tested by your own, and those of your friends in this quarter.

I have the honor to remain my dear Sir with the highest sentiments of esteem and respect, Your obedient Servant,

E. GERRY.

Hon'ble Colo. Burr,
Vice President of the U. States.

HENRY DEARBORN TO AARON BURR.

War Department
6th Nov. 1801.

Sir

I am honoured with your letter of the 27th ulto. and have given order for a compliance with the request of the Gentlemen

of Schenectady, for the discharge of Nicholas Sluyter. I have the honour to be Very respectfully, Sir, Your mo. ob. Serv

H. DEARBORN.

[Addressed] The Hon'ble Aaron Burr, Vice-President U.S., Albany. [Readdressed to] New York, N.Y.

C. A. RODNEY TO AARON BURR.

WILMINGTON December 20. 1801.

HONORED AND DEAR SIR,—I have been daily anticipating the pleasure of seeing you here and having received a letter from our friend Mr. Edwards that you were still at New-York I loose not a moment in informing you that added to the many personal considerations I have for wishing to see you, there are at present strong political reasons.

Notwithstanding our Chancellor has been prevailed on to resign (in a manner with which I will at a proper time make you acquainted) in consequence of which they obtain the appointment of that officer and as our present Attorney General N. Ridgely is to be the man they also obtain the appointment of a new Att'y General it has been lately settled to dispute the election of Governor. Their object is, and they have the members in our legislature to do it, to declare their candidate General Mitchell the Governor (duly elected) as having most legal votes.

This I fear will occasion consequences to be lamented by all. On this important and interesting subject I wish to consult you and that you may be informed of the course we mean to pursue with the approbation of our friends elsewhere.

Rest assured the idea was at one period totally abandoned and it is now taken up with a general view upon advising with others from different parts. In every stage it will be our duty to behave with prudence and moderation, but at the same time with the firmness of a "*Spartan band.*"

With great esteem and respect believe me Dear Sir Yours Most Sincerely

C. A. RODNEY.

[Addressed] Aaron Burr, V.President of the U. States, New-York.

HORATIO GATES TO AARON BURR.

NEW YORK 5th. Jan'ry 1802

MY DEAR SIR

In compliance with your request, I enclose two of Mr. Garnett's[74] Projects; and that I may not be to late for the post, send my Letter immediately to the Post Office. I hope You will arrive at Washington before the Session is over.

I am affectionately Yours

HORATIO GATES.

[Addressed] *Cut off* U. States, [ ] delphia.

[Memorandum] Gen'l Gates 5 Jan. 1802.

ISAIAH BLOOMFIELD TO AARON BURR.

BURLINGTON January 11th 1802.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Rossell has been with me, the two last days on a visit. I mentioned our conversation, respecting the office of Superviser. It was very gratifying to him, to know the part you took in his interest. He agrees with me, in the opinion I took the liberty to express to you, considering the necessity of union of every influential Republican in this State, and great propriety of supporting the nominations of the President; it is his fervent wish, (and desired me so to write to you) that Mr. Linn may be confirmed in his appointment by the Senate. Mr. Rossell has taken charge of a letter from me, to Philip Freneau; in which, I enclose Mr. Motts on the subject of Mr. Granger's inquiry, and have recommended Freneau, immediately on its reception, to write to Washington and to visit me.

I took the liberty to inform him, that I believed, you was very much his friend on this occasion.

As Freneau's present situation, needs the assistance of those who are disposed and have the power to employ his talents in a useful manner, in the service of the public, I have written to Mr. Mott and his colleagues, to do all they can to effect this desirable object.

It is impossible for me to add to the great respect and esteem with which, I am, Most truly and sincerely Your Friend,

I'H BLOOMFIELD.

The Honourable The Vice-President of the U. States.

[74]Probably James Mercer Garnett (1770-1843), of Virginia, interested in agriculture, instruction, and politics.

JOHN DICKINSON TO AARON BURR.

WILMINGTON the 23d of the 1st Month 1802.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Be pleased to accept my thanks for thy very kind letter of the 20th instant. It will prepare us for meeting reports, that otherwise would have been extremely distressing.

About five or six years ago at his place near Philadelphia the Dr.[75] fell in the same manner. Therefore by this last disorder I am induced to fear, there is some tenderness or defect in his constitution which requires the utmost attention. May it not be proper to communicate this intelligence to Dr. Eustis?[76]

Dr. Logan's love of country, candor of spirit, and boundless benevolence, render his life inestimable.

With every respectful consideration, I am Thy truely affectionate Friend,

JOHN DICKINSON.

Aaron Burr, Vice president.

[Addressed] Aaron Burr, Vice president in Congress.

ALEXANDER JAMES DALLAS TO AARON BURR.[77]

3d Feb: 1802.

DEAR SIR,—I received your favor of the [*blank*] instant. I will attend to your Director, if ever the proposed Bank should reach the point of organization, which I very much doubt.

On the judiciary question, I wrote my sentiments to Mr. Wilson Nicholas, early in the Session. I am sorry our friends have taken so peremptory a position, as the very circumstances of having taken it, will render it difficult to move them. I cannot concur with them in the policy , or expediency of the measure. The business of the Court will not allow me to give my reasons in detail; but you shall have my Brief.

1. There never was a case in which a party could be more justified in expressing their resentment, on account of the manner of passing the Act:

[75]Dr. George Logan (1753-1821), at this time United States Senator from Pennsylvania. He is best known as the occasion for the so-called Logan act of 1798, providing against officious meddling in foreign relations by a citizen. He was a Quaker.

[76]William Eustis (1753-1825), at this time a member of Congress from Massachusetts.

[77]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 2, p. 81.

the manner of organizing the Courts:
the nature of the opposition to the repeal, denying its Constitutionality, and menacing a civil war.

2. The repeal would be Constitutional, from a review of the principles and terms of the Constition itself.
of the peculiar situation of the Country, its growing population, its extending prospects, its encreasing wants, pursuits, and refinements etc. etc.
of the analogy to the judiciary institution of England, where independence of *the Legislature*, is not within the policy or provision of the Statutes relative to the Commissions of the Judges.
of the analogy to the judiciary institutions of the sister States, which have all been subject to Legislative interference occasionally. In Pennsylvania, particularly, the Constitution declares that the Judges shall hold their Commissions during good behaviour; yet it expressly authorises the Legislature to abolish the Courts of Common Pleas etc.
and of the precedents in the existing Act of Congress, which is an exercise of the power, *sub modo*.

3. But notwithstanding the indignation I feel, in common with our friends, at the manner of passing the Circuit Court Act; and notwithstanding my perfect conviction, that Congress has the power of repealing the Act, I think the repeal would be impolitic, and inexpedient: If it would be impolitic, acting on party principles, it would be inexpedient of course; but I mean, also, that it would [be] inexpedient, on account of the use that Pennsylvania (and I presume the same as to other States) has derived from the institution:

1. It is impolitic.
The Republicans are not agreed on the Constitutionality of the repeal.
The People, at large, have imbibed strong prejudices on the subject of judicial independence.
The repeal would be ascribed to party animosity; and, if future amendments should be made, it

would be considered as a personal proceeding, merely to remove the present Judges.

The hazard of loss in public opinion is greater than the hope of gain. There is a mass of the community, that will not be fermented by the leven of party passions. By persons of this description the motive and effect will be strictly analyzed and pursued.

The *mere resuscitation* of the old system, will either expose the administration of justice to inconceivable embarrassments, or demonstrate the motive to be, abstractedly, a part[y] one, by calling for an immediate reform.

The clamour of the Federalists will at least have a colourable foundation.

2. It is inexpedient.

The mere repeal will reinstate a system, which every man of common sense and candor must deprecate.

It will entirely destroy institutions susceptible of being modelled into a form, oeconomical as well as useful.

It will deprive some States of Tribunals, which have been found highly advantageous to the dispatch of business. I allude particularly to Penn'a. In this State, Justice, as far as respects our State Courts, is in a state of dissolution, from the excess of business, and the parsimony of the Legislature.

With this view of the subject, you will perceive, that I think

1. There ought not to be a total repeal.
2. There ought to be amendments.

If, however, a repeal should take place, I am clearly of opinion, that it would be unjustifiable to make any provision for the Ex-Judges. On this point, and on the introduction of amendments, I will, if you desire it, amplify by a future post.

The zealous Republicans are exciting some intemperance here, in opposition to a Memorial from our Bar, which, you will perceive, is confined to the operation of the Law in this

State, as a matter of fact, and not to any controversy of a Constitutional, or political nature.

I shall be anxious to hear from you, as often as you can spare a moment; and particularly while the Judiciary Bill is depending.

I am, with great regard, Sir,

A. J. Dallas.

M. Willett to Aaron Burr.[78]

New York 4th February 1802.

Dear Sir,—What a racket this vile Judiciary Law makes. It must be repealed. But how the Judges who have their appointment during good behaviour are to be removed without making a breach in the Constitution is beyond my abilities to develope. It will not however be the first rape on that instrument, and if two wrongs could make one right this account might be squared. But that horrid Law must, indeed it must be repealed.

I have received your two favours together, one dated 28th January and the other without date. The effect of the abolision of the internal taxes on Mr. O[sgood] gives me no concern. He has plenty of other business and money enough without that. I am more concerned about the nonentity of my fortification agency. This is an opperation which might be executed with peculiar advantage the ensuing summer nor do I think a substantial reason can be assigned for omiting it. I shall be glad to hear that our memorial has succeded. The omission of the Governmental officers in suffering such large and long defaulcations is our strong ground. As the present Comptroler is one of those officers, some watchfulness may be necessary to prevent foul play. I have nothing new. Mr. V Derline[79] is at Col. Smiths with his drawing materials and has taken lodgings with Capt. Pearsey. He has made me a beautifull picture. He promises to be more attentive in writing to you.

God bless you. You have my prayers always. And who dare say they are not as good as a Bishops, or any member of

[78]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 2, p. 173.

[79]John Vanderlyn (1775-1852) painted a portrait of Aaron Burr which belongs to the New York Historical Society.

a Presbiterian Synod. Sometimes I think I'll turn presbiterian that I may have the benefit of their prayers not to out live my usefull days. An event I deprecate above all others. And this is a prayer I never heard in our Church. I mean my church which you know is the Episcopal.

Most sincerely am I Dear Sir Yours,

M. WILLETT.

Col. Burr.

[Addressed] Aaron Burr Esquire, Vice President of the United States, Washington City.

THOMAS TRUXTUN[80] TO AARON BURR.

NORFOLK 14th February 1802.

MY DEAR SIR,—I got here a few days ago and have seen many, very many of your friends indeed, and you are toasted daily which gives me much pleasure; Altho' I knew it was the case and would daily be more and more so with certain characters, yet I had no idea changes could have become so great as I find them in half a year. P - - - is your friend but he exceeds a want of common decency in his declaration of other gentlemen. It is true his observations are calculated for the mob on election grounds—but they ought to be dispensed with in the society of gentlemen; but upon the whole he will do good and I most sincerely anticipate the pleasure of seeing you in the possession of the first office under our blessed Constitution after the 3d of March 1805, and I pray that events may turn up to put you there before. I cannot be a hypocrite to effect even the esteem of a man or of men who I don't believe has at heart those principles which are necessary to give character and consequence to our beloved country, which under the auspices of sence and greatness, would rival in a few years the greatest powers of Europe.

I am not afraid to think and to speak whenever I deem it necessary or usefull and if I was mean enough to be actuated by a fear of losing an appointment, I hold none that can check me. My friends in politiks are aware of your situation and how cautious you ought to be just now. And there are those here who you dont know—that have lately been at

[80](1755-1822.) He went to Norfolk to take command of the fleet for the war with Tripoli.

Washington and have heard enough drop from certain characters, to convince them and this society, that you are not in the confidence of - - - - - . The repeal of the Judiciary law has roused here Federalists and even Jacobins, and will unite them against such proceedings which threatens annihilation to our Constitution.

I have delivered your message to W. respecting the affairs of R. he thanks you, but I have not delivered your message to the lovely S- - - that you wish to see her and her father at Washington—tho' I have told her I had a message which I should deliver before I sailed, and like all women she is impatient to hear it and declares I must tell her immediately. I find the Chesapeake in a backward state, but shall hurry her preparations and equipment. You must take care of Alexander Hamilton, King, Pinckney, and Patterson, besides all those at the head of Departments, at least one of those nearest to - - - -.

M- - - is not satisfied where he is and if his friendship for - - - - is at an end, you have none to calculate from him. I am this moment called to sup with the amiable and the fair and we shall talk of you as usual before we rise.

With great attachment I have the honor to be Dear Sir Your very obedient humble Servant,

THOMAS TRUXTUN.

Hon'ble Aaron Burr, Esq.,
V.P., U.S.

[Addressed] Honorable Aaron Burr Esqr., Vice President of the U. S. Washington.

JAMES JACKSON[81] TO AARON BURR.

Saturday Morning.
[March, 1802.]

DEAR SIR,—I have positively declined the being run for the Chair. Who do you think best qualified on our side the house? it will not do to spare General Mason,[82] or Breckenridge.[83]

---

[81](1757-1806), United States Senator from Georgia.

[82]Stevens Thomson Mason (1760-1803), United States Senator from Virginia.

[83]John Breckinridge (1760-1806), United States Senator from Kentucky.

What I mentioned last evening as to a publication I wish to go no further, as I have decided to drop it. I allude to T- - - & D- - -.

I take this opportunity to express my thanks to you (for I suppose it must have come from you) for the Medal of General Gates, and should I not see you again, wish you a safe and pleasant journey and shall expect to be honored with a line on my reaching Savannah.

I am Dear Sir with great respect, Your Obedient Servant,

JAS. JACKSON.

Hon'ble Aaron Burr

Vice President U. States.

It is objected to Baldwin[84] that it is improper as the same honor is not paid twice. What think you of Bradley?[85]

[Addressed] Hon'ble Vice President, U. States.

GIDEON GRANGER TO AARON BURR.

March 10th 1802.

Allow me my friend to Introduce to your acquaintance Mr. Luther Pratt a republican Printer of East Windsor in Connecticut, He proposes establishing a Political Magazine and wishes Patronage. His sufferings while a Printer as Tory and his merits as a steadfast Republican entitle him to Patronage.

Yours sincerely,

The Vice President GID'N GRANGER.

SAMUEL S. SMITH TO AARON BURR.

PRINCETON March 13th 1802.

DEAR SIR,

The edifice of the college in this place, together with three libraries containing about three thousand volumes, was, a few days ago, entirely consumed by fire. It is not known whether this event was the effect of accident or of design; but commonly supposed to be of design. In our determination immediately to rebuild it, and, if possible, to improve its structure, it is become necessary to apply to the benevolence of the public; and in order to do this with success, to solicit the influence and

[84]Abraham Baldwin (1754-1807), United States Senator from Georgia, and at this time President *pro tem* of the Senate.

[85]Stephen Row Bradley (1754-1830), United States Senator from Vermont.

aid of those of its sons who are most distinguished for their talents, and the high reputation of their names. But, besides these advantages which point you out to the trustees among the first, the college holds, perhaps, a peculiar relation to you, owing its existence, as it does, principally to the extraordinary merits and exertions of a father so greatly and justly respected. Can I hope, Sir, for your particular interest in this important object, and your recommendation of it, both at the seat of government, and to your friends in New-York? And will you be good enough to suggest any improvement in the general plan of the institution which may occur to you. Subscriptions are opening with considerable vigor in different parts of New Jersey, and in Philadelphia; and, hitherto, we entertain sanguine hopes of completing the building in the course of the next Summer. I have written also to Mr Madison, and some other gentlemen in Congress on the same subject requesting them to co-operate with you, if you will be good enough to take the intrest in it which we hope. I am, most respectfully, Dear Sir, Yr Mo obdt & Mo hble Servt.

SAMUEL S. SMITH.

[Addressed] His Excellency Aaron Burr, Vice President of the United States.

URIAH TRACY[86] TO AARON BURR

The Sermon for which I am indebted to your goodness, is now returned with many thanks for the loan.

I have perused it with pleasure, & I hope, profit. It is an excellent treatise, worthy of the attention of every man and more emphatically so of men in high & responsible stations in Govt.

Our time is short, my friend, too short to allow an opp'y of retrieving almost any mispence of it; much more so, to allow a redemption for any neglect to perform great public services, when once happily in our power. God grant that you may be profited by this and in turn be more profitable to this distracted Nation.

U. Tracy.
29th March, [1802.]

Vice Prest.

---

[86](1755-1807), once a United States Senator from Connecticut, at this time a resident of Washington.

John Randolph to Aaron Burr

John Randolph finds, to his extreme surprize and chagrin, that the house of representatives, instead of acting on the business of the *nation*, have, by the vote of a great majority, gone into committee of the whole on a complicated *private claim*, not comprised in the report of the joint committee of the two houses. He therefore *despairs*, *utterly*, of getting away before the middle of next week. He is not vain enough to suppose that Col. B. will postpone his departure on *that* account:—but he shall be highly gratified by any cause of detention not disagreable to Col B. which shall give J. R. the pleasure of accompanying him thro Virginia.
friday Noon.
15 April [1802]
[Addressed] Col. Burr.

James Biddle to Aaron Burr.[87]

U. S. Ship *Constellation* at
Gibraltar May 8. 1802.

Dear Sir,—As the frigate Philadelphia will sail in a few days for America, I cannot neglect so good an opportunity of writing and returning you my sincere thanks, for the marked civilities I have received at all times from you, particularly at New York, the summer of 1800. Be assured, Sir, I feel the livliest sense of the obligations I am under for the many favours conferred upon me, and shall ever feel extremely happy to have it in my power to render you any service.

Owing to our being perplexed with almost constant easterly winds, we did not make the land until the 24th Ulto. when we made Cape Cantin on the Coast of Africa. On the 28th we got into the Streights of Gibraltar, but the wind heading us off the Rock, we were obliged to bear away for Malaga. There we found the Essex and Philadelphia at anchor. On the 3rd Inst. we left Malaga, and arrived here in company with the Philadelphia and Essex, on the fifth and I expect to remain here until Commodore Truxtun arrives on the Station.

While the ship lay at Malaga, I had an opportunity of seeing everything that could attract the eye of a stranger. The

[87] Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 2, p. 197.

country round the city is extremely fertile, abounding with all the different kinds of fruit trees. Indeed the lower class of the Spaniards subsist almost entirely upon fruit, the produce of the country, the chief articles of exportation being grapes, figs, anchovies, raisins, oranges, wines etc. etc. Their streets are very narrow, running at random in every direction, their houses are mostly built of marble, four stories high, different families occupying different stories of the same house. They have two or three forts built on eminences adjacent to the city, for its protection, but they are decaying, and out of order.

I anticipate enjoying a very pleasant cruize, as we seem to be favored with every thing that could render our situation agreeable. Capt. Murray is one of the best of men, and treats us with all the kindness and attention we could wish; the climate is very healthy and mild; the Tripolitans, keep among themselves, and never venture out, so that we shall have nothing to do, but visit the different ports of the Mediterranean; and the closest friendship, and social harmony prevails among the officers of the ship; every thing, in short, that we could wish, we seem to have, to make our situation comfortable.

Pray remember me kindly to Mrs. Alston, and Believe me, with much esteem and respect, Dear Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant,

JAMES BIDDLE.

Hon. A. Burr Esq'e.

[Addressed] The Hon'ble A. Burr Esquire, V. President of the U. States, City of Washington. [The "City of Washington" is crossed out, the letter evidently being forwarded from there to "New York."] Favored by Mr. Cl. Biddle Jun'r.

JOHN TAYLOR TO AARON BURR.[88]

Virginia, Caroline, May 25, 1802.

DEAR SIR,—Your favor, covering the medal struck to commemorate the most brilliant exploit of the American War, from some cause unknown to me, never arrived until this instant; it is particularly acceptable, from the circumstance

[88]Printed in Davis's "Memoirs of Aaron Burr," vol. 2, p. 198.

of my having imbibed a personal affection for General Gates, by having served under him for a few months.

It would be quite premature in me to consider, whether I would go into congress, unless it was probable that I could. The government have no means of providing for the gentleman you mention, and if they had, to do so, for the purpose of making room for another, might expose them to censure, which they will hardly encounter. As to a voluntary resignation of his station, there are some circumstances in his case, which do really justify him in refusing to do it, unless for some better prospect of public benefit.

Not until some days after you had left this, was it discovered that you had forgotten your traveling map. I lamented the inconveniences to which the oversight would expose you, but had no mode of removing them, despairing, from a recollection of your horses, that either of mine would be fleet enough to overtake you. The map could therefore only be taken care of, for the purpose of being restored to you. Permit me to hope, that you will allow me to do this at my own house as you return, and that you will apprise me of your resolution to do so, both that I may be at home, and that I may enjoy the hope of your company, before the pleasure is realized. Farewell. Yours sincerely and respectfully,

JOHN TAYLOR.

[Addressed] The Vice President of the United States, Charleston, South Carolina.

JAMES HILLHOUSE[89] TO AARON BURR

Mr. Hillhouse will have the honor of dining with the Vice President tomorrow agreeably to his invitation.

Dec. 20th. [1802]

[Addressed] Vice President United States.

JAMES MADISON TO MATTHEW L. DAVIS.

WASHINGTON Nov. 26, 1803.

Sir

I have read your letter of the 21st making certain enquiries relative to your brother George Davis.[90] The last letter from

[89](1754-1832), United States Senator from Connecticut.

[90]Appointed a surgeon in the United States Navy, January, 1800, by John Adams. He later was consul at Tunis and Tripoli.

him to the Dept. of State was dated July 3d last. From the communications of Mr. Cathcart[91] it appears that he left your brother at Tunis early in September. Mr. Cathcart was appointed successor to Mr. Eaton, but was not recd. by the Bey. No successor to Mr. Cathcart has been named by the President. I am Sir respectfully, Yr. obed. Ser.

JAMES MADISON.

JOHN ARMSTRONG[92] TO AARON BURR

Mr. Armstrong will have the honor of dining with Mr. Burr on Tuesday next.
Monday.

[Addressed] The Vice President.

DANIEL D. TOMPKINS TO AARON BURR.

NEW YORK 5 Dec. 1803

Dear Sir,

I have filed the Bill in Chancery and obtained and served an injunction. The rules of the Court requiring a deposit with the Register of $100, I paid him that sum.

By the newspapers it appears that Genl. Ledyard is dead, and I should not be surprised if Phelps should attempt to avail himself of this circumstance to obtain an order to dissolve the injunction; which will *enable* him to try his cause at the sittings in this month in case the Court should proceed far enough in the calendar of causes for trial.

I am not advised who are the heirs of Mr. Ledyard and in case a successful attempt should be made to dissolve the injunction, my ignorance of the names of the persons to make parties in Mr. B. Ledyard's stead, will put it out of my power *immediately* to obtain another injunction.

---

[91]James Leander Cathcart, was nominated July 7, 1797, by President Adams, to be Consul General of the United States for the city and kingdom of Tripoli. Cathcart was a citizen of the United States, but had been for many years a prisoner in Algiers and for some years "head Christian clerk" to the Dey of Algiers. In February, 1802, Jefferson had nominated him to be consul at Algiers in place of Richard O'Brian, and in November, 1803, to be consul at Tunis, in place of William Eaton, resigned.

[92](1755-1843), United States Senator from New York.

Would it not be well for you to drop me a letter stating the material papers in Mr. Ledyard's possession wanted upon a trial, which letter will enable me I doubt not to postpone the trial of the suit at law, should an effort to postpóne become necessary.

I presume my agent in Albany has not arrived to the grade of a Counsellor in Chancery. Should you therefore have any friend in Albany to whom you could refer me to oppose a motion before the Chancellor, have the goodness to mention it in your letter. I am Dr Sir respectfully your Sert

DANIEL D. TOMPKINS

The Honb. A. Burr.

[Addressed] The Honorable Aaron Burr, Washington.

JONATHAN DAYTON[93] TO AARON BURR

December, 1803.

DEAR SIR,

Owing to the weather and another cause not necessary or proper to be explained, I have entirely abandonded my intention of visiting Annapolis.

I know of no party going there. Mr. Purviance[94] was to have accompanied me, and taken dinner with General Stone[95] tomorrow, but he now speaks doubtfully of the jaunt, and I suspect will give it up.

I hope that you will not dissapoint Genl. S. especially as he has taken from hence three or four pairs of ducks to treat you, and something still better will have been prepared for me at his house, which I herewith transfer to you. Sincerely

J. DAYTON.

If you meet with Miss Murray, take an occasion, I pray you, of saying that I was coming to Anns. but prevented by sickness.

[Addressed] Honorable A. Burr, Esqr.

---

[93](1760-1824), United States Senator from New Jersey.

[94]Samuel D. Purviance, a member of Congress from North Carolina.

[95]Probably John Hoskin Stone (1745-1804).

JOHN ADAMS TO AARON BURR.

Mr. Adams present his respects to the Vice-President, and is happy to accept his obliging invitation to dinner to-morrow. 8. Jan'y 1804.

[Addressed] The Vice President of the United States.

ROBERT G. HARPER TO AARON BURR.

WASHINGTON Mar. 5th. 1804.

SIR,—

It has occurred to me that the Court of Impeachment, in deciding on the question now before it, may be desirous of seeing the evidence intended to be adduced, in support of the suggestion of Judge Pickering's[96] insanity. I have therefore taken the liberty of enclosing the depositions to you, and of requesting that you will be pleased to lay them before the Court.

If you have no objection, my dear Sir, to receive such a letter as the above, and to present it with the papers to the Court, I will send them in as soon as the senate meets.

It is my wish that in case the court should refuse to hear the suggestion of Insanity, it may hereafter appear that they did so with proof of the fact before them. Yours truly,

ROB. G. HARPER.

The Vice President

P.S. The depositions themselves, except one by Judge Terry of the H. M. which is not yet complete, are enclosed for your perusal.

R. G. H.

[Addressed] The Vice President of the United States.

JAMES A. WILKINSON TO AARON BURR.

To save time of which I need much and have but little, I propose to take a Bed with you this night, if it may be done without observation or intrusion—Answer me and if in the

---

[96]The impeachment of John Pickering (1737-1805) is related in the second volume of Henry Adams' *History*.

affirmative, I will be with [you] at 30' after the 8th Hour, Yours truly,

J. A. WILKINSON.

23rd May 1804
Col. Burr.

[Addressed] The Hon'ble A. Burr, Richmond.

LUTHER MARTIN TO JOSEPH ALSTON.

RICHMOND, 26th June, 1807.

SIR,—I have the painful task to inform you that my much esteemed friend, Col. Burr, was yesterday committed to Prison in consequence of a Bill for Treason being found by the Grand Jury against him. I arrived here the evening of May twenty-seventh, and have been with Col. Burr ever since. Nor shall I leave him until his Trial is at end. Never, I believe, did any Government thirst more for the Blood of a victim than our enligtend, philosophic, mild, philanthropic Government for the Blood of my friend. Two Gentlemen, considered here of the first talents, are employed to assist in the prosecution, or, as it may be truly said, the persecution—and the unfeeling, the savage manner each of these three[97] have adopted, in the course of the prosecution, would dishonor any Beings but Demons from Hell. That Col. Burr is as innocent of every thing of a treasonable nature as the child unborn I remain fully convinced, that he never had any object in view, but what did honor to himself, and would have been greatly useful to the United States, and to all Europe, except France and Spain, I am fully convinced. That a Bill has been found, has been owing to the Jury not being well informed what facts constitute Treason, and to gross perjury in swearing to facts not true. We feel the utmost confidence that he will be acquitted upon his Trial, and that he will ultimately Triumph over that malignant jealousy and inveterate hatred by which he is now persecuted. That Government ardently desire to destroy Col. Burr, that it would feel no more com-

[97] George Hay, William Wirt and Alexander McRae. On Burr's trial in Henry Adams' *History*, III, 441.

punction in taking his life, that that with which a philosopher views a rat expiring, with convulsions, at the bottom [of] an exhausted receiver, I have not a doubt. And I am confident that Government does not believe him to have been guilty of a treasonable act or design.

Under Col. Burr's present situation, you may be assured, it would be most pleasing, most consolatory to him, could you visit Richmond. He has many warm friends here at this time, who are not, and have not been, deterred from proving their attachment to him in the hour of adversity. And the popular odium, which had been so artfully and so basely excited against him has greatly decreased, and is still decreasing. While Wilkinson is viewed by many as the basest of villains. Nay such are the sentiments of the Grand Jury concerning him, that they were, yesterday, equally divided on the question, of finding a Bill against him for Treason.

Present my most respectful Compliments to your amiable Lady—tell her my Daughter, Maria, who came to Richmond with me, and who shares in all my sollicitudes for the fate of Col. Burr, wishes to be remembered by her—tell her, that, for her sake as well as her father's, all the professional powers I possess, are devoted to him, with all the zeal and ardency of friendship—tell her that, if on this occasion I had not come forward and offered my aid,—my services—every exertion of my mind, to shield him from his Enemies, I should have felt myself most deservedly liable to her eternal reproaches—and finally tell her she has my fervent prayers for her happiness.

You will forgive this intrusion upon you by a person, who has not the honor to be *personally* known to you, but who is with sentiments of respect and esteem for you, Your very obedient Servant,

LUTHER MARTIN.

The Hon'ble Joseph Alston.

Theodosia Burr Alston to Mrs Herman Blennerhassett.[98]

Virginia, Richmond, Aug. 5th, 1807.

It was with great regret, my dear Friend, that I learned your determination to remain at Natchez; we had been told that you were actually on your way hither; so well authenticated was this report, that after the arrival of Mr. Blennerhassett I still hoped to hear from him that you were not far off. Your absence is the more to be regretted as you might without any inconvenience have resided with Mr. B—I intended to have added to your comforts by my attentions, and hoped to have cheered you by the society of myself and friends.

Mr. B. is in perfectly good health, and Mr Alston who has visited him twice since his arrival, which took place yesterday, assures me that his spirits are good. The rooms in which he is confined are very comfortable, they were occupied by my Father till within a few days, *I* spent several days and one night in them; they are cool, clean and retired from all unpleasant *company*, I hope however that in a few days I shall be able to give you more pleasant and cheering information. Do not, then, suffer yourself to be depressed by apprehensions which must be unfounded. In the meantime rest assured that nothing shall be neglected to contribute to the comfort of your Husband in his present situation which, however, I repeat it, is more tolerable than you may imagine.

Adieu—Kiss your little ones for me. That Heaven may shower blessings on you all is the sincere wish of your affectionate

T. B. Alston.

My Father's trial will commence in a few days and we look forward to it with all the cheerfulness we must derive from innocence supported by talents;—for some of the most eminent advocates in the Union have volunteered their services in his cause.

---

[98] Adeline Agnew, daughter of the governor of the Isle of Man, married Blennerhassett in 1796. This letter crossed one from Mrs. Blennerhassett to her husband, August 3, 1807, saying: "Apprise Colonel Burr of my warmest acknowledgments, for his own and Mrs. Alston's kind remembrance; and tell him to assure her she has inspired me with a warmth of attachment which never can diminish. I wish him to urge her to write to me." Quoted in Parton's, "Life of Aaron Burr," p. 501.